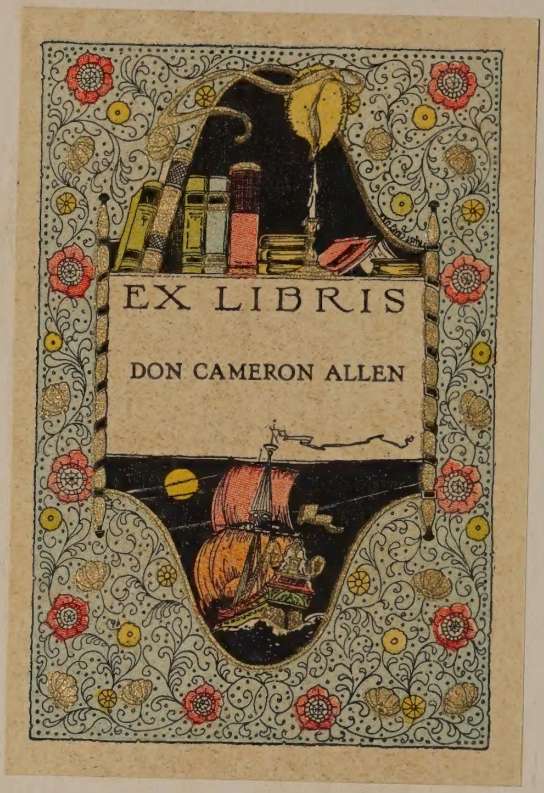
TOPHET AND EDEN

(HELL AND PARADISE)

IN IMITATION OF DANTE'S *INFERNO* AND *PARADISO*

HERMANN GOLLANCZ



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IN IMITATION OF DANTE'S *INFERNO* AND *PARADISO*

FROM THE HEBREW
OF IMMANUEL BEN SOLOMON ROMI,
DANTE'S CONTEMPORARY

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH, WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES
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INTRODUCTION

DANTE AND IMMANUEL

THE accompanying effort is no more than what it professes to be, namely, a tiny leaf added to the ever green laurel-wreath which is placed upon the Altar of Time to the memory of Italy's greatest poet —author of the *Divina Commedia*, the sexcentenary of whose death occurs in the September of this year.

In presenting, as far as I know for the first time in the English language, a literal translation (in rhymed prose) of the Hebrew rhymed-prosed imitation by Immanuel Romi of his friend Dante's immortal work, I merely wish to give an example (to be judged by outward form rather than by details) of the literary influence which Dante had upon this Hebrew writer, himself one of the most curious instances of contrast in human nature, if we base our opinion upon the thoughts which he has himself expressed in his collection of writings, known as the *Mechaberoth*.

My purpose is neither a study of the literary work or activities in general of Dante nor of Immanuel, but in solemn admiration for the literary pyramid erected by the former, and fascinated by the marvellous dexterity with which the latter was able to employ the Hebrew tongue, I shall be glad if this humble tribute of mine will do something to demonstrate the close connection in style and thought between one of Immanuel's treatises and Dante's *Inferno* and *Paradiso*.

I come before the public to-day not as an interpreter or literary critic and historian, but simply as a translator.

Immanuel's treatise appears in the printed editions of his *Mechaberoth* (Collectanea) as the twenty-eighth chapter—the last in the

book—which has been aptly styled " a sublime finale." It is entitled *Tophet and Eden* (Hell and Paradise).

There are grounds for supposing (even the opening words point to the conclusion) that this treatise was added later to his collection of poems, all of which seem to have been written at various periods of his career, and collected at the instance or in the house of his patron in later life. They form a conglomeration of letters, prayers and parodies, questions and answers, eulogies and elegies, the grave and the gay, in verse and rhymed prose.

It has been suggested by no less an authority than Geiger—and to my mind the suggestion is plausible, though some authorities dispute the theory—that in the person of "Daniel," who appears in Immanuel's rhymed-prosed poem as his guide, " the man of delight," his Hebrew friend desired to set up a monument to Dante, the Biblical name " Daniel " being a neat adaptation of the name " Dante."

We meet with something similar centuries later, when the Christian Lessing intended in *Nathan der Weise* to immortalise his Jewish friend, Moses Mendelssohn.

Without in the least surrendering the theory put forward by Geiger, there is yet another possibility, namely, that the choice of the name " Daniel " arose from a twofold suggestion : the one already referred to, i.e. as the nearest veiled substitute for the name " Dante " ; and secondly, the author may have had in mind the mystical character of the book of the Bible bearing the name of the prophet Daniel (a book which has always aroused the keenest interest among certain people in every land and age, and it did so in Italy) ; and what more reasonable than that a book of this nature should supply the name of its chief personage for the guide whose task it was to lead the poet through the realms of mystery in the regions of the unknown ?

In the Hebrew original, which, as I have already indicated, is contained in one single chapter, and is written in rhymed prose, there are no subdivisions. I have thought fit to take advantage of the natural divisions to which the chapter easily lends itself, and have divided it, for obvious reasons, into thirty-eight cantos. I would add

that the whole is a network of Biblical phrases and sentences, so remarkably and deftly interlaced, so skilfully adapted in a secondary sense, that it affords another evidence of the marvellous power of the Hebrew language (of the Bible), which, although of limited vocabulary, is able to express in so natural a manner, with so liquid a flow, the varied feelings and occurrences as portrayed in the shifting scenes and dramatic situations of life's experiences presented in this work.

I had at first intended marking by inverted commas all the expressions borrowed from Biblical phraseology, but I found that the multitude of such might have confused the reader rather than have helped him to appreciate the writer's skill. I have therefore, with few exceptions, limited the use of inverted commas to such passages from the Bible as were used by the author himself as actual quotations.

And now a few words as to the author himself. His name in full was Immanuel ben Solomon Romi; he was born in Rome (*Machbereth*, ix) in the middle of the thirteenth century, *c.* 1270, and came from the respected Judæo-Roman family Zifroni.

The period between the early part of the thirteenth century and the middle of the fourteenth was one of remarkable literary activity among the Jews of Italy. All branches of learning were well represented, whether it was the study of the Talmud or Bible exegesis, medicine or philosophy, or even the art of poetry. It may have been a reflex of the general condition of the times. It was about that time that the dawn of a new development in culture manifested itself in Italy—the signs of a desire for greater freedom and devotion in all that appertained to knowledge and art. And the Jews responded equally to the impulse. One of the most powerful of the Italian princes, Robert of Anjou, who was King of Naples and Count of Provence, was a veritable Mæcenas, and extended his patronage both in the political as well as the literary sense to the Jews of his day. He was ardently devoted to Jewish literature and studied Hebrew under Jewish teachers. It was to him and to the Pope at Avignon (as told by Immanuel in his *Hell and Paradise*) that a Jewish emissary was

sent by the community of Rome to appeal on behalf of their brethren in imminent danger in the terrible year 1321.

We find Immanuel in the year 1328 in Fermo, in the march of Ancona, where he settled in the house of a patron after having broken up his home, and wandered through Italy bowed down by poverty and age, in consequence of his having lost his entire fortune.

He has been styled both "the Heine of the Middle Ages" and "the Jewish Voltaire"; but neither of these epithets is wholly true of our author. What is true is, that a keen observer of human failings, he was one of the most satirical of poets, and that he brought into play for the purpose of lashing the vices of others the sacred language of the Bible—in which he was an undoubted master—in a manner that at times savoured of such irreverence as seemed to detract from the sacred character of that language and its original setting. Somewhat of a phenomenon in his days, he was full of wit and humour; but these, blended with his caustic satire, often bordered on frivolity and want of delicacy of expression. But, after all, if we strike the balance we shall find that his sins were but skin deep, and that his almost unique style of writing (similar to that of Yehuda Alcharizi in his *Tachkemoni*) in dealing with the delinquencies of his generation scarcely proceeded from a want of true religious or moral feeling, but rather argued that the Immanuel of real life was not the same as the Immanuel of the *Mechaberoth*. There are passages in this one treatise, *Tophet and Eden*, which will go to prove the truth of this statement. What more sublime sentiment, for example, than that contained in canto xi, referring to Wisdom!

"Wisdom is a ladder placed upon the earth, the top of which to Him doth reach who gave the world its birth; and to the degree that man by steps on high doth mount, he will by his ascent approach the Everlasting Fount; while him who holds himself afar, He, the Exalted, will not hail; aye, in body and in soul he will of a surety fail. For in proportion to man's capacity the claim against him is made; hence he who sinks in folly's sin, his soul as forfeit has paid. Nor will the plea for him avail who in indolence himself withdraws,

that man can make amends when he doth sin against Heaven's laws."

In the words of the modern Jewish historian Graetz (iv, p. 69, Eng. edit.) : " Although their poetic style is as opposite as the poles—Dante's ethereal, grave, and elevated ; Immanuel's smart, gay, and light—they nevertheless have some points in contact. Each had absorbed in himself the culture of the past ; Dante the Catholic, scholastic, and romantic elements ; Immanuel the Biblical, Talmudical, Maimunist, philosophical, and neo-Hebraic products."

Immanuel's Biblical commentaries, not to speak of his other works, embrace practically all the books of the Bible.

There is little doubt that Immanuel and Dante knew each other personally—they probably met in Rome ; and certainly there is no doubt whatsoever that Immanuel knew Dante's works, and utilised them ; the references, e.g. in our treatise to Aristotle, Plato, Galen, Hippocrates, and Avicenna, are surely not accidental or spontaneous. Not only did Immanuel also write in Italian, but " he was the first to adapt Italian numbers to the neo-Hebraic lyre. He introduced the alternative rhyme—the Terza rima in sonnet form " ; but his greater power lay undoubtedly in rhymed prose, by means of which he could indulge his taste and imagination, and send forth the shafts of ridicule as deadly as the sword.

It has been remarked (*ibid.*, p. 70) Dante wrote a " divine comedy, Immanuel a human one." Whatever this expression of criticism may imply, one thing is certain with regard to Immanuel's spiritual outlook : he was not swayed in his judgment on men by any narrow sectarianism, or even religious doctrine ; his satire was directed against men as men, and not against them as professing any particular religious belief. And this will explain the reason why, whilst in Dante's *Paradise*, canto xix, l. 103, we read with regard to those who are enjoying the bliss of the life eternal :

> " Into this Kingdom
> None who did not believe in Christ e'er mounted,
> Before or since He on the tree was fastened "—

we have in Immanuel's words (canto xxx) the broader and more welcome doctrine applied to " men filled with honour and majesty's spark . . . unto whom a passage was given in the region of the angels of heaven, the pious among the Gentile state, who by their intellect and wisdom have become great."

Then, again, in Immanuel's canto xxxii we have a fine example of Divine Forgiveness for sinners according to Jewish belief.

We might summarise the poem as follows : Immanuel had reached the sixtieth year of his life, when he was apprised of the death of a young friend, and he became alarmed for himself, knowing that he was a sinner. He was anxious to know what would befal him hereafter; and in his distress he cries out for Daniel, the man of wisdom and delight. He appears to him amid the storm in the guise of an old man : affrighted, he is roused by the apparition and comforted ; at his request he is informed that it is Daniel who is speaking, and ready to lead him through the nether-world, through Hell and Paradise. The journey begins, and all classes of men are met with ; the causes for their torments are explained by the guide to Immanuel, who, in several instances, is surprised at their presence, having thought they were exemplary in their conduct on earth.

The Bible is drawn upon freely for examples of sinners crowded in Hell : philosophers such as Aristotle, Plato, and Alfarabi ; medical men, such as Hippocrates and Galen, are to be found there, because they taught doctrines and practised their art contrary to the accepted views. Evil-doers in daily life, hypocrites in religion, officials unworthy of their calling, the selfish ones of the earth, all suffer for their guilt in this place of torment.

Having witnessed so much suffering in others, the poet thinks of himself and his own prospects when this life is ended, and inquires of his guide as to his own fate. He is, however, assured on this head, not because he is sinless, but on account of the many virtues which he possesses, particularly by reason of his activity in commenting upon the books of the Bible ; and for this merit a seat of honour is reserved for him in Paradise. This idea forms the transition in Immanuel's

poem from Tophet to Eden. Here we meet again with Bible names, post-Biblical literary figures, his predecessors and contemporaries, relatives, friends, and well-wishers, chiefly those distinguished as men of letters, and workers for the welfare of his brethren in Italy. Pious Gentiles, penitent sinners are there; authors of the books of the Bible, even King David and King Solomon, and Moses himself, hasten to greet Immanuel and to lavish upon him fulsome praise for his writings and comments. The seats of glory appointed for the Ten Jewish Martyrs in the time of Hadrian and those reserved for certain elect of his contemporaries, among them the Deputy of the Jews of Rome sent to the Pope in 1321, also the abode of some of the righteous ones of Orvieto, these are finally shown to our poet, and thus the pilgrimage comes to an end.

The guide vanishes, whereupon the poet awakes from his vision, resolved, in obedience to Daniel's request, to tell his experiences in Hell and Paradise for the benefit of those who come after him.

At the beginning of this brief Introduction I remarked, that I wished it to be inferred that this "imitation" by Immanuel was one rather in outward form than in details. I would, however, qualify this statement by showing, from a few specimen examples, that even in the matter of detail there is a strong resemblance between the two compositions.

Dante (*Inferno*, canto i) speaks of himself as 35 years old ("with half the pathway of our lifetime crossed"); Immanuel (c. i) says, "Sixty years of my life had now passed."

Immanuel (c. ii, etc.) refers to himself several times as swooning, so Dante (iii, v, etc.).

The expression (Im. iii, xxviii, etc.) "Take firm hold of my skirt" has its counterpart in D. (xvii), "See thou close embrace me."

The gate "Shallecheth" (Im. iii) is the one in Dante (iii) "through which is reached the dolorous abode," the gate of the Inferno.

Among "the Sages of those who know, sitting amid the philo-

sophic race," we have Aristotle, Plato, Hippocrates, Avicenna, and Galen common to both D. iv and Im. v.

The punishment of the sensual and wanton is depicted in D. v and in Im. vi and x.

" Who art thou, come before thy day ? " (D. viii) is in Im. (v) " Why, didst thou also commit a breach ? " and (viii) " Hast also fallen ? "

In Dante x the poet is asked by the risen shade concerning the fate of his son ; Im. (xxxiii) is asked a similar question.

" One recognised me," etc. (D. xv) ; Im. (viii) is recognised by and recognised his former friend.

The avaricious and money-grabbers are dealt with in D. vii, in Im. in xi ; hypocrites in D. xxiii, in Im. xiii and xvi ; the fraudulent in D. xvii, Im. xiv.

As in D. xxi " there boiled below a thick and pitchy tide which everywhere belimed the bank's whole line," so do " streams of pitch " punish the offenders in Im. x ; while " the bows and shafts " of Centaurs (D. xii) are reproduced in Im. (x and xii) in the slinging of stones, and the bows and arrows aimed at the culprits.

Soothsayers and diviners are punished in D. xx and Im. xx ; whilst " sowers in their lifetime of dissension and schism are in this wise cloven " in D. xxviii, as the teachers of wrong doctrines are in Im. xxvii.

In the *Paradiso* (xviii) are the " blessed spirits who, when below, before they came to heaven, were of such famous praise, that every Muse would find in them rich store " . . . " mention made of Joshua's name . . . and the Maccabee of fame."

In Im. (xxix) we have prophets, heroes, scholars, and martyrs in the realm " which doth to eternity endure, where there is continuous joy and gladness, of interruptions no trace " . . . " white in the garb of salvation and the mantle of righteousness, they were clad . . . exulting in song, and feasting on the radiance of the Shechinah all day long."

They have mounted thither by the " Ladder placed on earth, the

end of which to heaven did rise" (Im. xxix), the golden "ladder set so high on end that my eye could not to its summit peer" (D. xxi).

"Thrones were placed there . . . the marvel of miracles, to feast upon which the eye could not satisfy itself . . . like the work of bright sapphire, and as the very heaven for clearness" (Im. xxxi); "On that great stall whereon thy eyes are resting, drawn by the crown already set above it, shall sit the soul," etc. (D. xxx); "Those other Loves that move around about them thrones of the Face Divine are designated" (D. xxviii).

"There is a lustre there on high which renders visible the Creator to that creature which only hath its peace in that it sees Him" (D.xxx); "And if thou look at that which is unfolded by Daniel, thou wilt see that in his thousands a definite number is not indicated. The Primal Light, which all irradiates it, is into it received in modes as many as are the Splendours wherewithal 'tis coupled. . . . The height and breadth of the Eternal Power see now" (D. xxix).

Immanuel towards the end of his vision (xxxvii) speaks: "And it came to pass while we were in that honoured station, that Daniel, the man of delight, said unto me, 'As thou livest, God hath presented thee with a goodly ration, in having suffered thee to see of the past and the future things of wondrous worth, and hast seen the guard of the holy ones and the prophets of earth that do serve in Eden, God's garden from the world's birth.'"

With these introductory remarks, I would let the words of our author speak for themselves, though I cannot hope to reproduce adequately in translation the special and sparkling characteristics which attach to the Hebrew original, and which can only be appreciated at first hand by the thorough student of Hebrew, one conversant with Bible phraseology in particular and with Hebrew literature generally.

TOPHET[1] AND EDEN[2]

(HELL AND PARADISE)

The author, Immanuel, the son of Solomon, of blessed memory, speaks :

I

Sixty years of my life had now passed, and the pains of mortal had come on me fast, when of a sudden a man full of life and deeds, of piety too he had sown the seeds, bade adieu to the world and its ways, he was junior to me in years and days, and as I dwelt on the sorrowful sight, I was seized with pain, horror and fright.

Then said I, woe to me, benighted fool! Be ashamed and confounded, thou wretched tool of transgression and sin, error and crime, sunk in the depths of the mire of time. Have not God and man by me been cursed, more than my forbears in iniquity nursed? Were I of a sudden to be called on high, borne on the shoulders to the grave near by, and my comrades would seek me in vain with a sigh, what provision have I made on the journey to start, when the desolate soul from the body shall part? How shall I then speak and with judgment cope, if for the mercy of Him who forgiveth I cannot hope? While with musings such as these I the world forgot, my heart within me was hot[3]; with tears did the windows of my frame unfold, and as water poured out they rushed forth and rolled. Grievous and mournful did I feel at my state, thinking of my soul lost and my pitiful fate, since, in tribute to Desire, I killed myself in hate.

Then spake I, where is Daniel, the man of delight,[4] and so wise? Would that I knew where to find thee, before thy seat I would rise! I would ask, and thou wouldst tell me, and sate me from the

stream of thy treasure, and make known to me my end, and of my days the measure,[5] aye, indeed, the place where I may rest, and find repose and leisure.

II

Now, whilst I was deep in the slough of despond, my tears flowing full as the pond, while to gain the mastery sorrow and sighing over my heart were trying, there followed great darkness and fear, the sense of the weird, and unto me a vision forthwith appeared, it seemed the stream *Eulaeus*[6] I had neared. My heart went hither and thither at the splendour of the sight, I lifted up my eyes and looked, and the wind was exceeding in might, gaining strength as it moved right and left, crashing the hills, and breaking the cleft. When the wind had passed, the thunder rolled; deafened, my eyes with water ran, I grew cold. Then came the fire, and the voice soft and slight, and as the brightness of the sun the sevenfold light, when lo, and anon, an aged man before me passed in a mantle clad, methought the countenance of an angel of the Lord he had. At the sight of him I felt all numb, full length to the earth I fell, and was rendered dumb; so that when he saw my strength could not stand the test, he spake, Why slackest thou? Do not I seek thy rest? But rise and stand; this is not the rest that thou shalt gain; this day will I suffer thee thy release to attain; when forthwith shall be chased all sighing and pain.

As he spake to me, I grew more bold, and of the hem of his garment I took hold. I hugged and kissed the dust of his feet straightway, and said unto him, O lord, to thee do I pray, if I and my people can thy favour claim, tell me, I beseech thee, what is thy name? He answered and said, Daniel am I, by thee "man of delight" yclept, when but of late thy eyes streams of water wept.

Soon as thou didst supplicate, it was decreed to show to thee here the terrible things that may be seen in riddle, not in vision clear; even to-day will I show them in pictures in mystery veiled, have no fear. Open thine eyes, and around thee gaze; understand the thing and

the vision's ways ! I have been sent, and am come to do thee good, so that wisdom of thee shall be understood.

Be thy request of the depth or the height, state it at once, soon must I vanish from sight.

Then spake I : That thou wouldst show me the world everlasting I crave, and *Tophet* too, destined of yore as the wicked one's grave ; show me where, after death, will be the place of my rest, where the house thou wilt build me, and I shall dwell best. " O draw me, and after thee I will run." [7]

He answered and said, thy will shall be done. The man then did ask, Whither first shall we turn ? and I said, Eden last, Tophet first, which for ever doth burn.

III

Then spake the man : Take firm hold of my skirt, as thou hast begun, so that 'twixt thee and me, of space there be none ; for the place whither we turn parched hath been made by heat, 'tis orderless and nought but shade—called the Valley of Corpses, dead and decayed.

As I seized the hem of his cloak, fear with my feelings blended ; and as soon as we departed to go, we gradually felt that we had descended ; the way was certainly not of an upward flight, but one veiled in darkness and gloom and bewildering fright. The paths were all crooked, ever turning and winding; we perceived the thunder's roar and the lightning's flash blinding. Nought was heard but the sound of the tempest wild and shrieks, as of one giving birth to her firstborn child, so that that day by me " the Day of Wrath " was styled. Lastly, a shattered bridge we reached, 'neath which a gushing stream did flow, that seemed to snatch and sweep all things below—I then began to feel my pulse grow slow. At the head of the bridge there was a gate, where the flame of the Sword that turned [8] kept guard, and the man to me did say, This the gate *Shallecheth* [9] is called, ill-starred, to which they who from the world depart, who in Tophet find their places, direct their steps, and hitherward do turn

their faces. We move not hence one hour or two; we watch the throng of those who pass from earth in fullest measure, a myriad strong. By the Angel of Death we see them brought to the land of shade and darkness and drought; we watch their corruption and their further destruction; we marvel not at their pain, at their great sorrow's train, for a froward generation were they, children from faith ready to part, therefore the sword which they plied upon them has turned, and entered their heart.

IV

Now during the time we there did spend, to the sounds of fearful terrors did we attend; sickening voices our ears did meet, enough our senses to stun, voices that cried "Our hope is lost," [10] we feel that "we are undone." And as they drew near we saw, indeed, the fate which they had won. For we saw how the evil angels were changing their stations, rending hundreds and thousands as their daily rations; saying unto each as they passed thro' the gate, Son of man, thou who with the best things of earth thyself didst sate, yet God and man thou didst curse in thy folly and hate, spew forth what thou didst gulp in thy former state, reap the fruit of the acts thou hast sown—this is thy fate. Here thou shalt find of thy work the reward; those who enter remain; those who would leave, herein are stored. Then they that are dragged and torn with the cry of bitterness cry; as the slain on the field moaning, they wail and sigh, knowing that the poison of asps [11] they shall suck dry.

Then unto me the man did say: Hast thou seen the lost sheep which from the path have strayed? Soon will they in Tophet as target for its shafts be arrayed. Soon shalt thou see those who in vain the earth did cumber, a multitude as many as the stars of heaven in number.

V

Having crossed the bridge, to the nethermost parts of the earth we did reach, and all who saw me exclaimed, "Why, didst thou also

commit a breach ? " There did we see a land of gloom, a great funeral-pyre its claim ; its sparks of fire, burning with a mighty flame. The stake was of fire and wood without end, nor day nor night its force did it spend. Then said the man : This is the pile that gleams, burning as of brimstone the streams, reserved for souls full of rebellion's dreams. Wouldst thou know why the wicked are here, and what is their name ? Study closely the name on their forehead inscribed with their shame.

Now as I peered intently into this funeral pile of horror, I saw therein the men that once were in Sodom and Gomorrah,[12] and Esau, who the birthright spurned,[13] and Shimei,[14] Gera's son (who with hatred burned). There was Athaliah,[15] who the seed royal had destroyed ; Absalom,[16] too, Maacha's son, of filial feeling void. There was the Levite,[17] whom Micah to his house did call ; there was Ahaziah,[18] who thro' the lattice did fall. There was Sisera,[19] over whom the coverlet did flow ; also Haman, Hamadatha's son,[20] Israel's bitter foe ; Amalek, too, who at Rephidim to Israel the gage did throw.[21] There was Yaazaniah, the son of Shaphan,[22] and there was Joab [23] ; Jokim,[24] and the men of Kozeebah,[25] and Joash,[26] and Saraph,[27] who had dominion in Moab ; and Johanan, Kareah's son,[28] Yaazaniah,[29] son of Hoseyaah ; and there was Ishmael,[30] the son of Nethaniah. There I saw Pharaoh-Necho [31] and Pharaoh [32] inspiring awe ; and there was Gehazi,[33] struck with the leprous sore. Here could be seen Balaam,[34] the son of Beor, for the matter of Kozbi and the sin at Peor ; Abimelech,[35] too, son of Yerubaal ; there all the prophets who joined unto Baal.[36] There was Ahitophel, the Gilonite [37] ; there Sheba ben Bichri,[38] the Benjamite ; there Zimri ben Salu,[39] prince of the house of his father, the Shimonite ; there Sanballat, the Horonite,[40] and the servant Tobiah,[41] the Ammonite, as well as Geshem, the Arabian,[42] and Nabal, the Carmelite [43] ; and then Eli's sons, Hophni and Phinehas,[44] came into sight ; these latter were made to the sewers to descend, for to the women that about did crowd they themselves did lend.[45] Lo, here was Ahab,[46] son of Kolaiah, and Maaseiah's son, Zedekiah,[47] who once the curse on men did bring ;

their names among them as vile oaths did ring. There was Doeg,[48] the Edomite, oh that from earth his memory may rot! He dealt out to the eighty ephod-clad priests a terrible lot. There was Cain,[49] the killer of Abel; there was Ahab, and also Izabel[50]; there was Zedekiah,[51] son of Chenaaniah; Rechab, too, and Baanah,[52] because they slew the hapless Ish-bosheth; and Ziba, the servitor of Saul,[53] because he lamed the infant Mephibosheth. There was Ham,[54] who, intent upon his father's shame, outside had raced to tell his brothers two to come in haste; there were Lot's daughters,[55] who from their father had conceived, and Pashur ben Immer,[56] to have come from priestly stock believed. There was Sihon,[57] king of the Amorite; eke the sons of Seir,[57a] the Horite. The sight of Og,[58] king of Bashan, met one's eyes, as the smoke of the furnace his smoke did rise. Nebuzaraddan,[59] captain of the guard, and Sennacherib,[60] too, in torment roared; Nebuchadnezzar[61] was discerned, who had laid waste the House of the Lord. Then there were Belah,[62] king of Sodom, and Birsha,[63] Cushan-Rishosayim,[64] also Mesha,[65] and Titus,[66] the wicked, known as "Ha-rasha." There were Ahiman, Sheshai and Talmai,[67] sons of Anak; and quaffing the poison of asps, Antiochus[68] never did slack. Rehum,[69] the Chancellor, and Shimshai,[70] his scribe, Shelomith,[71] daughter of Dibri, accursed of her tribe. Here, too, Uzziah,[72] king of Judah, on his forehead the leper's stain; Hiel,[73] the Bethelite, builder of Jericho, which till then had in ashes lain; Jeroboam,[74] son of Nebat, because he made the calves of gold, and of his heart desired the month to change of the God of old; and many priests of the high-places were there, who their conscience also sold.

Innumerable was the toll of those who led an incestuous life, and at the head of these was seen the Egyptian Potiphar's wife.[75] Amon[76] was there, who the God of old denied; he spurned the Word of the Lord, and His commands defied. There was Jehoyakim,[77] who to sins of exaction himself did lend, Amnon[78] and Jonadab,[79] son of Shimeah, the former's friend. There was Peninah,[80] who did sorely Hannah[81] vex, and Shechem,[82] Hamor's son, who in Dinah disgraced her sex. Jehoash[83] is there for the blood of Zechariah, and Ahaz,[84]

son of Jotham, who was the son of Uzziah. There was Baasha,[85] son of Ahiah, and Azariah,[86] son of Amaziah. There was Zimri,[87] who in Tirzah reigned, and Jehoyakim,[88] who his all by vile oppression gained. There was Evil-Merodach,[89] cheating in all he would say, and Belshazzar,[90] about whose head the flaming coals did play; for he drank out of God's stolen vessels while all too merry and gay, his princes, his wives, and his concubines, who did the king's order obey. There you see Canaan,[91] under the curse's ban, his sin and crime laid up, and clear to every man; "they grind him in the mill, and beat him in the mortar, and bake him in the pan."[92] The foes of Benjamin and Judah, too, received the rebel's wage, because they stopped the builder's work, and provoked them by their rage.[93] Aristotle[94] was there, dumb in perplexity, because he professed belief in the world's eternity; and Galen[95] too, chief among those of the medical art, for against Moses, greatest of prophets, he sent forth his tongue's venomous dart. There was Abu Nasr (Alfarabi[96]), the day is done for this sage, because he held that the idea of the affinity of the human mind with Absolute Intelligence was the folly of old age; and contesting the belief in the transmigration of desolate souls, cut off from the midst of their own, he held that their mortal coil they would once again don wheresoever they chanced to reside, rising in that very soil. There was Plato,[97] of philosophers the head, because of the various kinds and species he said, that beyond the region of sense they did exist, and in his so-called philosophy he did persist. There was Hippocrates,[98] because of knowledge he laid up a store, yet as a miser he kept back his work on medical lore. There was Avicenna,[99] a very object of derision and scorn, because he held man might have descended far back, and not from mortal been born; that mountains arose from a natural cause: may his speech from him be torn! for after the belief in the eternity of matter, he was drawn. And there were men without number, sooner or later sent to their account, new ones and old ones, too many, indeed, for me to recount.

VI

Journeying thence, we beheld a puffing cauldron, joined at the uttermost limits, with copper and iron, tin and lead, all to be found within it.

"Put on the pot!" "Place it there!" the voice did say; "Set it, that the flaming coal around may play!" "The beasts prepare, that tear their prey!" for lo, the host of those who went the adulteress' way, their sin has trapped them, they have no stay; they willed not th' everlasting life; let them be in shame's array. While we were speaking, they were snatched away, as in the southern tempests' fray, rushed in confusion and destruction astray; and cooing as doves in the vale, they began their condition to hail; thick upon the cheeks their tears did rest, to the wail of the dove they beat their breast. Thereupon of evil angels a troop would cast them into the boiling pot, and when therein, they would break up, as flesh in a kettle hot. Then unto them a mighty voice would cry, "Ye did not have the wit to choose the precious things of heaven above, then descend to destruction's pit, where fears and dangers and calamities grow, eat to the full of the fruits that crouch in the deep below!" [100]

VII

We journeyed thence, the abyss was steep, void and desolate, and in dreariness deep, no sound therein but the cry of those who weep. There were lions there, and panthers too; scorpions abound of streaky hue. Then said the man unto me: To this place of forgetfulness these men are hauled, otherwise "the bottomless pit" it is called, who hazarded all on a throw of the dice, and said to themselves, "The Lord sees not our vice." Their blood must be sprinkled as from the bowl, for the Lord's hand is against them body and soul; because to God above they turned in their play, and with their mouths and hearts they did curse Him when they turned with empty pockets away. When, therefore, their misdeeds are measured, themselves

let them blame, if of pity there's none, when vengeance puts forth its claim.

VIII

As from thence we wended our way, to reach another spot in Tophet we did essay ; there we saw a mighty one whom Fortune on earth had favoured, now with misfortune dire a hapless one belaboured; his skin did cleave to him, yet his face was not bright ; burning in the devouring fire, to consume him the fire had no might. He knew me ; I, too, remembered him at the end ; in days gone by he loved me well, and I became his friend.

And as he saw me going to and fro, my surprise thus owning, he sent forth from his frame a heavy burst of groaning, and addressed me, saying, Who, and what art thou here, me thus bemoaning ? Hast thou also fallen as the men of sin do fall ? Like us thou, too, art sick, and to thee as to us has come the call ? Then said the guide who grasped my hand, I swear by my own dignity grand, that as the apple of the eye his watch I'll stand, that he will not be like unto thee at all, so that when he runs he shall not fall. Then spake I to him, burning in Tophet's fire now lost, enquiringly : Say now, thou writhing in pain and tempest-tossed—what is the thing that has hither thee sought, a chief (among men) with diadem decked in diamonds wrought, and now far from salvation and peace thou art brought ? Then answered the wight from the hurricane turning, from the midst of the fire in which he was burning, and with a voice of bitterness and woe, he began to speak, The thing is so : Wretched me, with rashness and grief and sorrow all stained, my soul is bewailing my lot, and my flesh upon me is pained ! How stupid and senseless, indeed, I have been, when the house which I builded my temple I'd ween, built not in the place where now I might screen ! Would I had built it in heaven's high station, and in the hills everlasting I had laid its foundation ! Woe to me, alas, I was nothing more than a grazing ass; leaving all to others, I've come to this pass. When all my works I multiplied, for God, my Maker, I never sighed. I prepared me gardens, orchards and

woods,[101] I gathered gold and silver, riches and goods, geese that were fattened on various foods, and anklets that pandered to fashion's moods, but I forgot to shield the haunts where sorrow broods. While I refused to give bread to the poor to eat, I favoured the worthless and wanton having at my table their seat; and instead of helping those students versed in precept and law, I ate of all rich things and drank sweet wines galore—the beauty of goodly action (by contrast) I never saw. Pleasant fruits and strengthening wines had I, and wool spotless white, but as for the Law and the Testimony, they never came to my sight. I said in my heart, Unto Heaven will I ascend, but wonderful was the fall. Time hath lain in wait for me, and I am caught once for all. As the weaver I cut short the web of my life, my couch I have spread where darkness is rife. I bewail the heights from which I fell, because I served not Him too well, and how I perish, I come to tell. To others I left my wealth—earth's foil, and nought remains of all my toil; what boots it if with profit I my fingers did soil, when bereft I shake off this mortal coil?

What led me to acquire estates? To improve them from within and without, what labour have I spent! How I gathered in objects and possessions on which I was bent! Nor son nor daughter had I to inherit that which I leave, nor nearest of kin my fortune to enjoy, as I would fain believe; nay, I have had to leave all to the lover of her whom once as wife I claimed, and he now treads and rides rough-shod o'er the heights which I once gained.

Why not have helped with my fortune a desolate widow to wed, or freshened the heart of the child whose father and mother were dead? To entrench myself in this fleeting world was my all and every thought, and why did I not in heaven build my enduring house and court?

I, too, had learnt, while life was short, its work was great; what, therefore, I have sown, I'll reap at that same rate. In torment's grasp, as potter's clay am I prostrate; I cannot turn nor right nor left from the narrow path and strait. And as yesterday I did not feel for other poor ones' woe, to day I'm left without a friend to pity me so low. If having neither kith nor kin my state was sad, why did

I fail to make the heart of the poor widow glad? For what I spent upon my windows might have gone to help the needy widows.

Alas, my foolish heart turned me aside, in arrogance clothed I in this garb did hide.

A Syrian temple I once had willed with open windows latticed to build, and with precious damasks to have it filled, to show princes and peoples how beauty can gild. I thus increasing my works thought to increase my fame, for no son had I to call to remembrance my name. But in the luxurious bath to which once for my purpose she came, my wife now bathes for another, to my confusion and shame. I planted a vineyard, but it was not by ceremony redeemed; I had my experience of that of which I never had dreamed. I built me a palace, but dedicate it I could not, for which I once had sighed; oil-trees had I throughout my demesnes, but my anointing therewith was ever denied. They who saw me building the place exclaimed, O happy man! They little knew how soon to another I'd leave it, after life's brief span, in it not even a hurried sleep to snatch, if that had been my plan. I made the beginning in its building, but to finish another came in at the end; how soon from my brethren and from the gate of my dwelling my name itself did spend!

What boots it that I built a house of dimensions, having chambers spacious and wide, and overlaid with silver and gold bolts and bars on every side; that I stocked it with treasures by nature brought forth, and even those of art, with precious fruits of the sun, and with those whose birth from the moon doth start, [102] when neither father nor brother had I to take of my possessions their part, nor sons nor daughters? Why to lonely souls did I not give, as was meet, to widows and orphans, that of my gifts they might freely eat; those depressed and afflicted, swooning thro' hunger at the top of each street?

Among the ills which befel me since death, and made me feel sore, 'tis this: by two men I've been rushed for two years or more; they raised me from the grave, my last resting-floor, and on the wings of the eagles on high they me bore, to the city Ancona [103] they brought me, to my own palace door.

Then an awful sight did meet me ; I thought the end of days had come, and that God had pardoned the sin of the many and made transgression dumb, thinking perchance that from this day and onward I might to my trials succumb. And thinking it might thus be well, to me they cried, Attend, thou son of Hell ! 'Tis not as you do think and tell, for among the scorpions thou yet shalt dwell. Ill upon ill shall be your litter, worse than death, and aye more bitter. When this I heard the light was from me withdrawn ; having my hand in theirs, after them I was hurriedly torn. I then to my bathing chamber was brought, and my wife and new lover seeing, made me their sport. I saw her spread her embroideries with her own hand, and her husband new opposite her stand, and in the water which for the women crowd I once had prepared, she now took her ablutions, and my eyes forthwith stared. Then only, and not till then, did my eye drop many a tear. I felt a pang no mouth can tell, nor any ear could hear. Thereupon they said unto me, O Man of Villainy, if " running with the footmen thou wast wearied in the chase, thinkest thou with horses' speed thou shalt be able to keep pace ? " [104] However thus thy wife to meet astounded thou might be, yet maddened thou shalt further be by the sights which thou shalt see.

So to the bathing-room they brought me home, and while my eyes round about did roam, I there espied a couch all fresh and green, whereupon my wife and he asleep were seen, well-content were they, and far from lean. Her left arm beneath her head, his right embracing near by, and a voice was heard : " A wife thou shalt wed, another with her shall lie." [105] Then I was vanquished, for fire seized my bones from on high. Thereafter they brought me hither, baffled and drear, as thou thyself canst judge who seest me here. Let on my behalf thy soul pour forth its prayer in fullest tide, for to this I've come at the present hour, I cannot turn from side to side ; for my iniquity and transgression have entrapped my steps in succession ; the rot has entered my bones too soon, and my heaven has grown darkened even at noon ; what my forefathers gathered and deemed such a boon, I was forced to yield up when in death I did

swoon. Naked I came forth from my mother's womb; naked I returned when I went to the tomb; and nought did I gain of all my toil, but the rags and tatters which my lot did soil. With my house and possessions to strangers turned, my sins upon me recoil.

Why did I build a winter-house, and a house to keep off the heat? See, they both have gone from me, they beat a hasty retreat. In place of the bath and the range, I behold a river strange. In place of the rimmed cup with lilies adorned, holding the must, I now see flashes of fire and the oven with its smoky crust, and many a handful of worry from the furnace with its ashes and dust. And in place of the bird specially dressed for my delight, nought but terror I see and gross darkness as of the night; and in place of sweet wine we once drank, and of foods rich and fatty we ate, when were served up before me things of the noble and glittering state, we stumble at noon as in twilight, and as dead men are we in places desolate; and as once I delighted in geese well-fed, they feed on me now as sheep to the pasture led, and "as waters cover the sea" [106] am I covered with terror and dread; and instead of finding rest in my green refreshing bed, as the monster do I wail, and I mourn as the ostrich to mourning bred, for "in the evening I lodge with weeping, at morn my dirge" has not yet fled. [107]

For the panellings of ivory in the buildings I did own, for the quantities of vessels in gold and precious stone, for the divers golden goblets from which drunken we nigh had grown, and for the rings for ear and finger, and for tapestries artfully sewn, and for fields and vineyards once mine,—oh, for this spread of destruction which I moan, the lightnings and the thunders which mine all have overthrown! I see now nought but faces sullen and of angry tone. Instead of the chamber with vaulted dome, in sackcloth and ashes I spread my home; and instead of the oaken porch at the door, my name is cut off from my people for evermore. The porch away is torn, I dwell abashed and forlorn, the whole world's scorn. And in place of the casks, and the tower with terraces built to a height, my birds and my game, I hold the nethermost pit, the abode of

desolation and fright. In place of fine flour, and wheat so good, and badger's skin and Shittim wood, see me bound to the trough, a vessel crude, lying down where flames of fire intrude. I see men sacrificed and slain, taken forth to die, among the slaughtered lain. And whilst in my house there met the class that scoffed, and men of vice, and every tongue would speak folly and utter evil device, "lo, here the fire and wood, and I the lamb for the sacrifice" [108]— the lamb sought for by my parents, to whom joy at my birth did bloom. Rise, O dawn, from the gloom, for my extremes and my inwards to the fire give room, and as to-day so shall be to-morrow's doom. Would that in life such days of visitation had been my rote, I need not now have aimed to marks of such distinction and note! Then go and tell unto those who yet their days among the living spend, what befel the ones of mortal kind who their ways would not amend; and the causes, too, "that they may understand their latter end." [109]

IX

We journeyed thence, and, behold, men in a group there were that to the blind belong, I would estimate the class at one hundred and twenty strong; men of science and learning were they, well known in their land, at the head of the thousands of Israel did they stand.

Then to me said the man who had hold of my right,—As thou livest, object most pleasant to my sight! As for these men they have been exhausted in iniquity's sea, for eyes they had, but they did not see; though they knew the grades of science, and how in value it doth rise, they failed to see in its very light true light with their own eyes. With scientific lore, they caught the public gaze; their names became emblazoned on all the public ways; but higher wisdom's knowledge they spurned, which sheds its pleasant rays. Therefore, at noon they grope as in twilight, and fumble about as tho' they had no sight, and as for the things to which they openly did cleave, and love so dearly, without the camp they have to leave,

and as waters that fail, the objects in which they did believe. They leave them to those lying on ivory couches with their wives, and to those who formed targets for their curse's arrows in their lives.

For "the emptiers have emptied them,"[110] they are wiped out by their sin; and so this day they miss the things they found their desire therein.

X

We journeyed thence, and lo, an aged man, in stature great, as a target they did place, upon his head of thorns and thistles they formed his crown of grace; and of that which man doth from his body expel they put to his nostrils to smell. They chastised him with the scorpion's lash, and in many ways did they around him dash; they would suffer his gall along the earth to trail, and with the cruel adder his nakedness assail; they would raise him up to the top of a high tower, and thence upon the head of a rock him down they would shower. One time to be burnt in fire would be his dower; at another, torn by the wolves of the desert, him they would devour; now the bow of brass would him overpower, streams of pitch and brimstone would snatch him for the hour; then in the destructive torrents overwhelming he would make his bower; and anon, the horns of the Reëm[111] dashing at him would make him sour; they would break his neck "as the first-born of an ass,"[112] termed in our language "Chamour," and from the light they would thrust him forth, and in darkness he would cower. At one time with the slinging of stones they would him annoy, saying to him thus: "Thou didst love to make destruction thy toy; 'happy they who, seizing thee, dash thee against the rock,' thy life shall destroy!"[113] At him with engines of war they hit; and never do they suffer him to gain respite. Never by day nor night do they give him rest, and day by day they seek out for him some new pest.

Now, when I saw such punishments dire, I writhed at the hearing, my sight did tire, and I asked: What sort of man can this be, whose great pain I now see? Then said the man who my right hand

did hold, "Knowest thou not?" and I replied, "I know him not of old." Then said he to me: This man is of the stubborn and rebellious ones, the habitual liar; his name is well known—of these he is the sire; like unto him we have seen none so base, since our Temple was destroyed by fire.

He studied the Word of God, but not in the spirit of the Law;[114] he added sin unto sin for the sake of increasing his store; as adulterer he had ne'er enough, he always longed for more. For purpose vile he would e'en draw near to the beast that walks on four. It is for this he encounters here so many ills and sore. He did disturb the Law of Moses of his abominable will; he sold himself by doing that which in the sight of God was ill; the loved holy things of God profaning, His Bethel[115] he disdained still. He went astray with women strange, to these he gave his might; no female slave was safe that came within his sight, it mattered not if she were Moabite, or even Ammonite, Hebrew or Christian, or servant by Egypt sold, he spurned reproof, and destroyed the covenant of old. For this has the knell of his destruction tolled. His was a wretched unclean soul, that ignorant to women in their courses stole, even when plague or leprosy was their dole, even to the sow and the stubborn ass's foal. The woman-slave betrothed, or she in whose ear they bored a hole,[116] the one half-witted or seduced, in wickedness reaching Athaliah's goal, the harlot claiming with her mouth, one led and lame and far from whole, e'en one conceiving, about to bear, and downwards bent about to roll, women whose unnatural ways with men were writ on infamy's scroll, as far as Jahaza, Kedemoth and Mephaath,[117] crowding cheek by jowl. Not one of these that did not serve as sport for one so droll, for bestiality in all the land known as master sole. No wonder, then, that he is made to quaff the staggering reeling bowl. Though he knew of his Creator, a rebel himself he averred; himself sinning, others from the path of right he deterred; the multitude's sin and its penalty against him were preferred; covering his face in its fat, to act as Antiochus and as fell Haman on he was spurred, nay, even as Jeroboam with his calves of gold, and Manasseh with his sword, to ill he was stirred.

For days and years past he held the Holy Name in profanation, and books both old and late speak of his scornful provocation. Go and tell the deceived fool that yester Hell-fire does not cool, that the Almighty's wrath he'll drink, verily cruel. Upon him neither pity nor mercy will be spent, as the cities which the Lord overthrew, and He did not repent. For God Above he denied, and from him will proceed one designing ill against the Lord, and counselling evil deed; let him, therefore, know that hail with fire lit, and snares and trap and pit, are laid up as his punishment fit, and tho' intervening one should say, "Redeem him from the grave,[118] let him flit," his fruit from above will be cut off, and from beneath his root will be hit, because his soul he held back (from remorse), and did not as penitent firmly sit.

XI

We journeyed thence, and see two men in the snares of Tophet caught; and looking intent upon their faces, to my remembrance they were brought; and for the plight in which I saw them I was full well distraught, since among the first and foremost they once did sit in the domain of knowledge and true wit, while other folks were far behind in mental grit.

Then said I to the man who my right hand held, Tell me, O lord, wherefore these by such horrors are felled. And he answered, saying, These are two brothers from Maresha's fort,[119] niggardliness to be their possession they thought, in this vile quality their holiness they sought, and that liberality was foul and of bad odour, they taught. Their hand was modest, giving away nought, held back as a maiden to whom no man has been brought. To them liberality was but for weakness another name, the sister-feeling for what was sickly and lame.

"Give! give!" their hands would say, as much as they could hold, and then they made them gods of silver and of gold; they loved them with all their heart and soul, deeming this of man's law the whole. When objects of delight, when wealth and glory, in did

roll, they never thought this came by their Creator's help, His kindly dole, whose mercy is advanced to the living, as writ on Eternity's scroll. Not as a trust in their hands but as their goal, did these men regard them, for they never helped earth's helpless toll; they willed not the service of another, fearing lest from them their secret they stole; from the day God created these men, they held aloof, and of themselves were masters sole.

They said they found in books of Grecian lore the moderate rule, "Mine is mine, and thine is thy own store"; forgetting that this is Sodom and Gomorrah's rule,[120] they having cut from thence this branch of a maxim cruel. These in all their strivings had but this one trend—to gather wealth and treasure without end. They would say, All this substance we have won; by the strength of our hands it has been done,[121] in that our skill and wisdom their course did run. And when they saw a man ashamed to beg, e'en Poverty's son, they would hide from him, and cry aloud, "Begone, you unclean one!"

They would hate the poor, of every good bereft, as the Ishmaelite hates the swine with hoof cleft, as girls of fashion the ascetic who society has left, as cats hate mice, of nimble ways and deft. They felt no pain for those who in misfortune would languish, who, naked and in want of all, would hither and thither be driven in anguish; and in the hour when the poor to them would cry, they would flee from them, as the tears would fill their eye. And to every poor and needy only, "You fool!" they would say, "what your father bequeathed you, why did you eat up in an extravagant way?" They never gave a farthing to the poor but what they felt regret most sore, and then only with an angry look and a roar, with trembling and something more, so that it be understood and known out-of-door.

When they heard of a man reduced from his estate, they would say, "His own fault, he deserves his fate; he was not so frugal as we in trying to spare, nor so methodical in action, as we had a care." They hid themselves from those brought low, and turned their face from those who stripped would go. At their house none were seen, neither from far nor from near; the traveller would flee from a distance

when their growl he would hear. The text "Load him with gifts" [123] is wiped out of their book, 'tis clear.

The saying "Thy bread upon the waters cast" is long since gone, a thing of the past; "you will *not* find it after many days," [124] they read; they have therefore blotted it out of their creed. But they did put their faith, at any rate, in the words "Give a portion to seven, and also to eight" [124]; but carefully added this is the meaning they preferred, "Give to seven men or eight" a portion of bird, and cut it not up in two, as often occurred, as is done by the foolish, and is quite absurd.

This, too, is the way they explained, "To the needy thou shalt open thy hand wide" [125]: "Spread wide the five fingers of thy hand" to beat the face and confuse them who in want abide, since God Himself has shown that He is exacting their dues by suffering them to be terrified. One of these two by his Creator has sworn, and by the life of his son, the firstborn, that in his copy of the Law for "unto him" the word "not" should be read, whilst the other explained when in the text "Open wide thy hand unto him" it is said, it means he should show that nought of the poor sticks to his hand (not a thread). They, too, interpreted thus the words "On pledge to him thou shalt lend" [126]: Take from the poor the pledge, when, meeting his need, it may tend by sufficiency to bring his state of want to an end.

Of Holy Writ these men desired to know but the Midrashic explanation, the bare Hebrew text and the cold translation, but cut off as the sea was their spiritual imagination. They had wit, device and cunning to learn, but to Wisdom proper they did not turn; and the Word of Wisdom which they heard spoken they would despise, and if they caught it, they would lock it away from men's eyes. True wisdom they would deem meanness and shame, and the study thereof folly worthy of blame. If to describe the Science of Logic they attempt, they speak of it as empty and vain, deserving contempt. And as to those who to the Science of Philosophy themselves apply, who studies sweeter than honey and the droppings of the honeycomb supply, masters of refinement who test what the laws

of mind imply, "They are but pulling up plants and shrubs," these critics reply. They hold that to be at the threshold of the gates of science is to break thro' the fence, while to hold aloof from looking in at its teachings is pleasing and beyond offence.

They knew not that Wisdom a ladder is placed upon the earth, the top of which to Him doth reach who gave the world its birth, and in proportion as man by steps on high doth mount, he will by his ascent approach the Everlasting Fount; while him who holds himself afar, He, the Exalted, will not hail, aye, in body and in soul he will of a surety fail. For in proportion to man's capacity the claim against him is made; hence he who sinks in folly's sea, his soul as forfeit has paid. Nor will the plea for him avail who in indolence himself withdraws, that man can make amends when he doth sin against Heaven's laws. Now these men who are ever at ease, fat and fresh, settled on their lees, would they had wisdom sought as eagerly as silver treasure, how they might have heaped up thereof a goodly store in fullest measure, just as to place silver as stones in their houses had been their pleasure! Strange, that never sated in gathering wealth, at three score and ten they wake not from their sleep, these men of leisure. And this is the sorrow which they rear in their breast, that poor and wretched they will remain among the rest, their fear lest poverty will be their glory's crest.

No man, they think, does in wickedness tread, but he who lies with her who to another is wed, or he who to the service of Baal is led; or he who another's wealth doth steal, or he who with alien thought doth feel, or to gods that are strange doth kneel. They forget that stealthily to deceive another man's mind,[127] e'en tho' he be of the non-Jewish, Edomite, Zidonite, or Hittite kind,[128] on the plea that in the principles of Truth he be far behind—conduct such as this is worse than by stealing money your wealth to find. And to rob from the intellectual sense, and render its power of comprehension blind, even to deny it the glorious Sciences,[129] 'tis greater sin than on theft and robbery your faith to bind. Such men see others naked of sense, and give them no intellectual cover; they chase from

them intelligent thinking (of which man should be a lover), holding that they act but as Ecclesiastes bids, over them his spirit doth hover.

'Tis this : How can the mortal man coming after the King with his task already done, expect the prize to recover ? [130] Since man hath not the power to reach the higher state which the Law doth preach, 'tis better to remain on the lower step, they teach; "labour not in vain and bring not forth to confusion," [131] they beseech. They realise not that if as king a man cannot stand, 'tis better he be second in command, than to be on the level of the scavenger band ; and he who as second cannot raise his hand, 'tis better he be a leader or rider on horse than the carpenter or blacksmith (which is surely more coarse) ; and he who cannot to the height of leader rise, rather than be an iron-worker or smithy, let him devote himself to merchandise. 'Tis better as prefect or overseer thyself to apply, than the task of trader or trafficker to ply ; and so 'tis better to be in a trade, or to be the healer of another ache, than to do the work of a butcher, or for others bread to bake. Nevertheless, 'tis even better to be head of those who deal with meat, than to go round begging at the doors for bread to eat.[132] To be a judge or scribe is better than as weaver or sempster to figure, or of catacombs and graves to be the digger. Better to be a goldsmith and attend to the refiner's art, than to slaughter a lamb, or in breaking a dog's neck [133] to take part.

In like manner, he who cannot a Moses be, let him not wish himself a Manasseh [134] to see ; rather, with Heaven's help, to be a Joshua [135] let him strive, and this being denied him, let him as a Samuel [136] thrive. Let him who cannot be an Elijah [137] be content to serve as an Elisha,[138] and not sinning for a piece of bread to be as Birsha and Mesha. And if he cannot be as Jeremiah,[139] let him be as Baruch ben Neriah,[140] but not as Ahaz, son of Jotham ben Uzziah.

These, therefore, who on the Ladder of Wisdom might have risen, but, not rising, in ignorance their decline established, have from the Sanctuary of the King, the Lord of Hosts, been utterly banished, and their feet caught in the pit of destruction, they fell, and have vanished.

XII

And as we journeyed thence, we saw a man with his right hand and tongue all slit; they had made of him a target, against which with darts from brazen bow they hit, so that thereby to the earth his very gall, pouring forth, did flit. Now, placed upon an iron grid, he would of roasting endure the pang; again, in bitter waters they would immerse him with a clang; then again, him upon a wooden gallows they would hang; at another time with stones at him they would bang. Then I asked the man who spake to me, why this situation, what the cause and reason for this especial tribulation.

And he replied and said: His was a tongue that did speak vauntingly, and in his heart iniquity did ramble jauntingly. In his father's face he would spit and utter a vile curse; he would run and catch by the neck those who this rebel once did nurse. He laboured his sire with blows which, time after time, had been given, till at length the cries of the father reached to the throne of Heaven: it is on this account that he now in fire and water is riven. The Lord thus unto him hath done, as he had once designed, so that he and his associates shall no longer be held in mind; the Lord our God has silenced them, they have ceased to grind.

Strange that such a cursing wretch should not have laid to heart, that those God's hand will sure undo, who cause their parents wounded heart to smart, whose blood and marrow fed and drenched them, and of whom they form a part. Has this truth been forgot of this shameful upstart, that he from father and mother jointly forth to the world did start? No wonder then, dire reproach the world to his life doth impart. His tongue is cut because in cursing his father, against him he did rebel, and because he struck him blows, his right hand they did fell, so that he can no longer lift up his voice, and to the world his misdeeds tell, nor spread out on earth his riches, and show that all is well. No sound from him is further heard save those of fears and cares, result of his bad qualities, retribution for which he bears.

XIII

Our journey here having ended, to another spot in Tophet our steps we wended. Some Hebrew men we espied, by their tongues depended they were tied. By archers they were surrounded, ready to bring their torment ; they shot at them, and suddenly their bodies by the wound-inflicting dart were rent. And as I marvelled amazedly, what this grievous ill all meant, my guide addressed me : Sorrow for this their doom needlessly is spent, and for the Almighty's displeasure, which to terrify them is sent. These men through life never like their fathers went, themselves as a seal upon the tablet of Time to indent. Rather to sleep on the ivory couch, or spread themselves upon their beds, was their intent.

On week-days in their nightgowns wrapt, they'd sleep on for hours till late, and excuse themselves by saying, every Israelite is of the royal state ; but on the Sabbaths and New Moon fête, and on the Lord's Festivals consecrate, they would say, Let us get ready at quicker rate, for who other than we should fix the orders of the day, or who, that he rose before us, should be able to say ? Three times in the year they would be up to take part in the early service at morn, and on the Atonement Day they would rise at the break of dawn ; never mind if they put their Fast by strife and contention to scorn. They would say : Not one of them is able that choice piece of liturgy [141] to recite : 'tis our heirloom, [141a] which upon us from our fathers did alight. These men would quarrel about their seats, and cry out with a bark, " We deserve the seats of honour—those placed at the side of the Ark ! " [142]

One would say, The Prayers I will conduct on the day of *Kippurim* [143] ; another would say, The Scroll of Esther I will read on the joyous day of *Purim*.[144]

They would speak : How is it possible that men in mourning, Jews in sorrow, should come near to recite the *En Komoucho* [145] on the Three Festivals of the year ? [146] And who, on the day of the " Rejoicing of the Law," [147] to finish the " Five Books " should have

the right, but those who have the management of affairs and those who have the might ?

And who should conduct the service on Sabbath and on New Moon, but those to whom their sanctity has proved to them a boon ? Who should have the privilege the Vision of Isaiah [146] to read, but they whose work it was the violent in the right way to lead ? And the prayers on the "Great Hosannah" [148a] to read, who more would miss than we, heirs of the life to come, the world of bliss ?

And who on the Feast of "Unleavened Bread" [149] is the fitter man for prayer, than he whose task in life it was the breaches to repair, and render them things of beauty at which all lands do stare ? And who has the greater right to read on Feasts and Festival-tide,[150] than the man who can speak of pedigree, and over the numbered flock preside ? Now if our pleasant voices our assemblies had never stirred, chanting the prayers with melody, and the *Yozeroth* [151] like a bird, when would our beautiful voices ever have been heard ? To have thought of decking our heads with glory's crown would, indeed, have been absurd. Therefore, only on Feast and Festival by intoning the *Haphtara* [152] has this chance occurred.

Such were the arguments these men used from the time that they were born ; this was the regulating norm of life, clear to their minds as the morn.

Then said my guide : It is because upon their necks such arrogance did press, that this unspeakable misfortune their bodies now caress.

XIV

Now, as we journeyed thence, men once in violence fleet, dismembered as to their thumbs and the toes of their feet, hanging on gallows of trees, we did meet. Their flesh was being eaten by some fowl wild and fierce, and their eyes the young eagle and raven of the valley did pierce. Hail and fire did upon them continuously rain ; their fruit from above, their root below, were caught in

destruction's train. As I looked on, like wax it melted my heart, and I asked the man who spake to me if he would to me the cause impart.

He answered: The smoke of folly thro' their nostrils found its way; hardened in spirit, they stiffened their necks for the fray; roaring like whelps, they would pounce upon their prey; therefore, their stars are darkened, they have no day. They were once in the Lord's band, but they have departed from His land; "going forth to gather and finding no store," they did covet houses and fields and rob them, thus breaking God's law; "His yoke from off them they did shake," and "with their wiles they themselves tyrants did make"; they stole and lied, and put into their vessels what they could take; not content to gather of that which Thou to them didst give, they changed the paths, and by stripping the garment of its ornament they would live. For this they are now smitten, madness and blindness to them are doled; and while e'en the fragments of the "Tables" were placed in the Ark of old, these shall have no portion, nor will their memory in God's Temple have a hold. Their lot is to drink the cup of reeling, and on to destruction to be rolled.

XV

And as we journeyed from thence, we looked upon wrath, fury, and anguish, seeing men passed thro' the kiln, how hewn by the saw they languish; with faces black as the pot, they cry forth their pitiful tale, and with bitter mourning, broken in spirit, they increasingly do wail. When I saw their grievous woe I was full dismayed, too prostrate was I to listen, and to look I was afraid. And as I was about to earth to fall, the man who was leading unto me did call: These men from birth have gone astray; their hope is lost, cut from the land of life away; for as cruel to themselves, they went their way, fully girded and ready themselves to slay; their bones by the pit scattered they lay, and they are for this driven forth to scare; from seeing any happiness they despair, and inheriting a self-devouring fire which them doth tear. They imagined in their knowledge which

was narrow, that at death all trouble and anger would be spared to their marrow; these little knew whom now afflictions kill, that they would once go forth from ill to ill; that once God's anger against them would be blown, and that they would reap of acts the fruits which they had sown.

Now from thence we made our start, and came to Tophet's nethermost part. At a pit in terror so different from others, we did pause; the tongue would tire to tell the cause. There coals of juniper and sharpened arrows abound; there the poison of asps, and serpents are to be found; there the burning serpent and the fangs of viper one saw, there was every plague and stroke not written in God's Law. There was the pestle and the pounded corn, and there the fiery beasts for men to be torn; and there flames of fire were burning, well-nigh to fainting the onlooker turning. Then I enquired concerning the pestle and corn what did it mean, and what kind of service therein could be seen. And the reply came to me thus: This pit " the Pit of Perdition " is named; destined from the beginning for all who as children of " the Silly Shepherd " [153] are claimed; and particularly for (the modern) Hiel the Beth-elite,[153a] for his wickedness famed. Seven times in the day they would grind him in the mortar, with the pestle maimed. This added to the torments he endured when him ferocious beasts did tear, or when the devouring fire round and about him did flare. And I asked concerning this Hiel, what causes does this betoken, peradventure I might discover them if I were given some token.

And the man replied, This man began contemptuously and never mended: all his days he vowed to give, but it never in fulfilment ended; to his Faith as a sceptic he gave offence, and to him lying and falsehood were wisdom and sense.

He made of the words of the Law an axe wherewith to hew, and he studied it to deceive, and for cunning to devise him a cue, thinking so stupidly in his heart, from the vain and the false I'll make me crowns ever new; aye, to tamper with deeds shall be my work, and of these not a few. No secret did man entrust to him, for

spewing it out, to others he would it impart; he would bring some base report against the innocent, devised from his own heart; with the moneys of others that came into his hands, he would be despicably smart. A tyrant he was of beastly face, wicked unto heaven, and to creatures base. As Balaam, by greed hypnotised; the reproach of men, and of the people despised; sinning himself, as Jeroboam to make others sin, he dearly prized; the counterpart of what to David was Doeg the Edomite; separating attached friends by slanderous spite; for his was a revengeful spirit, inimical without pity, not hesitating to endanger the people of his own city. If one were to recount the pressure and destruction by his blemishes wrought, 'twere as though a single drop in the ocean were sought; to heap upon himself every reproach and blame, this was his care; presumptuous sins by no means few upon him he did bear, and among the trusted ones he never had a share. Wouldst thou know how, as the ostrich in the desert, he was cruel and cold, and how his abominations and provocations were as they are told, and how the barriers of intelligence to destroy as his pleasure he would hold, and how in anger against the Lord and His anointed he was bold, how as *puer impurus* his habits he would mould,[154]—then go and see what a tale the people themselves unfold. His father's and his family knew he belonged to the violent lot, who never scrupled to trample on the granaries in every spot; men ever refrained from showing him the ledgers which they had got, and to send them to the public chest they thought a risky lot; reveal to him their secret stores, they certainly would not, fearing lest plundering and despoiling them, against them he would plot. Placing their goods in the emporium more secure did they feel, than handing them over to him, and with him to have a deal; they feared lest he might rob them of what might once prove scarcity's meal.

No wonder, then, that his head they take and tear it with the harpoon, and that the fruit of his land and all his toil will be possessed by the locust soon, since he kept not his eyes from what he saw, and regarded them as life's boon; but to give thereof to the bitter in

soul he did never his heart attune ; with himself how deeds of goodness to do, he was too slack to commune. By my living soul, these ills did all overtake him, I aver ; either because his day is come, or 'tis God's punishments which occur ; in this pit shall be his camping-ground, from which he shall not stir, receiving from God's Hand doubly for his sin, as against His Will he did demur.

On hearing this man's words, from the signs he gave, I at once Hiel the Bethelite discerned, and I realised that to be caught in these torments was no mere chance, but deservedly earned. Truly is he fit object for this place, and the place fit for him, and for all men of this same ilk, who their lives to wickedness trim.

What marvel, then, that his soul doth mourn, and his flesh in pain doth grieve ; a son rejecting his father's law, him lightly to deceive, created to be an agent to destruction's ways to cleave. 'Tis, therefore, that he now from God ill-fortune doth receive.

XVI

We journeyed thence, and one hundred and fifty men we beheld in the snares of Tophet held ; and as I studied their form, I saw in them heads of families born, and I was utterly dismayed at their state so terrible and forlorn, when I called to mind their splendid station from which they were torn, and the goodly deeds and pious acts which their life-work did adorn. I remembered that everywhere they were heads of delegations, famed for their wit and knowledge to men of all the nations. So I asked the man who spoke to me to give me the cause and reason, and what were the things that brought on them so dire and dreadful a season.

And he answered : True it is, these were the great ones of their generation, and their task it should have been to help those in every station ; to strengthen the breach of the House of the Lord, and to reclaim it from degradation. But what did they do ? They sent before the Lord to pray him who went the drunkard and the glutton's

way, profaning God's Sanctuary as long as he may, boasting before men in the light of the day. Whilst engaged in prayer, signalling with his eyes and feet,[154a] he thus would play; and while, ass as he was, by rolling up the Scroll of the Law, he would seem it honour to pay, the wicked one was thinking boastfully wherein his heart's desire lay. When raising his voice to the words "The Voice of the Lord maketh the hinds to skip"[155] in the fray, he knew not if it was a blessing he pronounced, or if words of cursing he did say. And should his prayers be listened to, he would say by way of scorn, "What sound of bleating sheep is this that meets my ears"[156] this morn? And instead of choosing a Reader for his brilliant qualities and good, one full of learning and bursting with spiritual food, one the same in lips and heart, his thoughts devoted to take God's part, not of the class from which lust does start, not one who would to his friends all dues impart, nor one who from flattering the rich would not depart, one fearing God and from evil turning, they chose an evil-doer and hypocrite, all instruction spurning, to have one like a Gehazi; for a leper they were yearning. As deputy of the Congregation, I ask, is it right to have a boor, to wickedness bound tight, one buried in lust and having the constant fight, not comprehending a word he says of what he but reads at sight?

To learn the precepts of Mount Sinai, their fathers did disdain, and does not the Lord reject him who offers ill-gotten gain?[157] Should a man before a noble or a prefect ever be sent, who knew not what he was saying, or what his message meant?

Why, then, not be ashamed to send before the King of Kings one deserving of rebuke, having a soul sullied with unclean things? If men to their Pasha brought such gift of service near, would he be pleased, would he not turn away from it with a sneer?[158] If men had a matter which they wished before their prince or ruler to place, surely they would choose one who could with a clear conscience them face—a counsellor wise who some device would dare, pleading on their behalf to deliver them from the fowler's snare.

How could they choose of the people to minister before the Ark

on their behalf, one who, pretending to be moved, was yet no better than a Jeroboam's calf ?

No wonder then, if what overtakes them will be but tribulation, and the only message which they will learn will be their own vexation.

XVII

Now as we journeyed thence, we saw of humankind born those from whom the light of day had been withdrawn ; their sun and moon were dark, of beauty's form they had no spark ; in the gloom of darkness did they stand, theirs was a kingdom in the low-land. Death's breakers surrounded them, Belial's streams gave them fright, because they denied the God above, denied His might.

And whēn I saw them sunken in the depths of sorrow's mire, like unto those who act towards God and man as felons dire, I enquired to know what they had done to see them thus, what course they had run. And he said unto me, These be apostates, to rebellion inciting ; they had learned the Law, the Prophets and the Holy Writing, the Mishna and the Gemara,[159] the Siphre and the Siphra,[160] the Tosephoth [161] and its comment, the Collectanea, and what later thought meant. These be such as make of Law and Learning crowns and axes,[162] to their own purpose turning ; crowns with which themselves to glorify, axes wherewith their means of sustenance to amplify. They loved not the Law and the Learning for their own sake, because they with great glory their possessors honourable make,[163] but they use them as instruments helping them other things to take. In their minds, defective and tainted, the thought was ever burning, that the things to attain which they were ever yearning, were of higher value than the Law and Learning ; but little did they understand that these were like the merchantships, to catch them up, the desire must daily be on the early seeker's lips, to reach their heights he must goad Desire with Longing's whips ; let him not intend them as means to bring other things within their grips. These endowments to God come nigh ; they dwell between the Cherubim on high. They, there-

fore, who through Law and Wisdom, of the Living God gift Divine, think to obtain the things material, or to themselves among the living glory to assign, are indeed dreaming one continuous dream, and never the way of peace to know they seem. Their actions will not be favourably held as sound, for their life is spent in selfish round; hence saith Solomon, Wisdom's King, "They who me do find life have found." [164] His words are not that he who findeth Wisdom findeth that which leadeth on to other good, but that in finding her he findeth that form of Life which is the highest, be it understood.

XVIII

We journeyed thence, and the sight our eyes did meet of fifty men trampled on by flaming horses' feet, whereas toils, "as water covering the sea," about them did beat. Then said I, Who are these upon whom the curse doth press, and Judgment done its worst, of destruction and distress? And he answered, saying, These be the men whose wickedness did the world oppress, who the doors of the baths and wash-houses did caress, to glance at the women going and returning, who by their ablutions their purification from uncleanness were earning. They went after vanity, and became fools at the end, a man neighing lustful for the wife of his friend; they enquire, "Why all this?" the cause not knowing they pretend; hence they are hurled to desolation where torments do rend, where misfortune will upon them be bestowed, for the boast of their lust upon their necks they did load.

How many women, modest and shy, through them from the duty of ablution did fly, with tears of regret filling their eye, calling for vengeance on them from their Maker on High! These fools did not know that at a life they were aiming the blow; for, through them some of these altogether from their ablutions would abstain, and they thus lost this merit for ever, and God suffered them not their life to retain.

XIX

We journeyed thence, and saw men bound in chains, put into the mouths of lions and bears, galled by hunger's pains. Soon did their end come, their destruction seemed swift, as I gazed on their torments —a sorrowful gift. I then discerned they were men who themselves over the congregation did lift; in their name and fame, spread throughout the peoples of the earth, there was no rift. Thence spake I, How can Justice deal destruction to those of a generation who in righteousness proved their thrift, such as one might cherish as a special dower from treasures which men do sift; "we have laboured in vain, and brought forth to confusion," is their dying shrift.

Then said the one who spake to me: These are the men who are accursed, for when in prayer in sight of others they were immersed, they seemed as tho' in the solemn prayer of Atonement Day to be nursed, in the one hundred and twenty genuflections and prostrations they were versed; from start to finish to bendings and tremor stirred, they showed their devotion by their every word—and the genuflection was so perfectly adjusted and fine, that there were loosened all the vertebræ in the column of the spine. But during the time they spent alone in their dwellings and courts, there was not a sign from their lips of any prayerful thoughts; they simply roamed about in the avenues of their crime, and the commission of sin was their consideration prime. As in the days of Gibeah,[165] so did they sink down deep, opening their mouths and raising their voice with a shout, as tho' to murder they would leap; they made of themselves hypocrites, and when speaking unto the Lord, before Him with error they would creep. They would affect piety before the men of their day, yet when it was a matter of sin, as Dathan and Abiram,[166] they would come to stay; they forgot their Creator, and to their evil disposition court they would pay, changing "Him that was their Glory for that which shame"[166a] upon them would lay. 'Tis on this account that the anger of the Lord against them hath burned, and to leave of them neither root nor branch He hath yearned.

XX

We journeyed thence, and lo, there were pits full of serpents, poisonous and flying, hundreds and thousands of lions and leopards tearing the dying, and round about angels of death with their swords were plying, and torrents of mighty waters in floods were lying, making the hearts of onlookers gasp with sighing.

Then said I, Who are these that for destruction are eagerly trying? He replied, These be they caught in witchcraft and divining, necromancers, and magicians, conjuring with Teraphim [167] and the false assigning, with mumming and whispering their craft designing. These now are by the angel of the Lord expelled repining, and by the King's Word, the Lord of Hosts, despatched at full speed declining. And it is because the earth has been entirely defiled by their corruption, that the Lord's anger has been kindled against them to their destruction.

XXI

We journeyed thence, and as we looked about in one spot of Tophet amid the throngs, we saw men taken forth to die bound to the troughs with prongs, whilst the Angels of Death did detail unto them their wrongs, beating them with scorpions and thongs. As I studied their form, I recognised them before long, and marvelled why they should be dragged to death by the tong,[167a] for they were Ephrathites,[168] celebrated in song, regarded as patterns of morality and humility; and I thought that a future of hope would be theirs by equity, considering what these had to complain of in life, when losses in wealth and children were rife.

Then I asked the man who spake to me as to the cause, and why they were now hurled to destruction, and by whose laws. Then said he to me, These be the men who protested their innocence when evil them did befal: "We are smitten, but not through our sins and transgressions at all!" "True, too, the loss of wealth and children we have endured, but it is the accident of the times to which we are inured." And when it was a question of bodily sickness and pains,

they would not confess they were sent for rebellion's stains; and, therefore, altho' the loss of offspring comes near to act as an atonement for one's soul, to become incensed and defy the Power Above, is to deny His existence as a whole.

On the other hand, he who trembles at God's Word, and with His bounties doth glow, will not give way to anger when sorrows upon him grow; he will but regard such trial as meet reward for that which he did sow. With good grace he will receive such and in love, and it will ever be reckoned unto him as a free-will gift by Him Above. And should his substance grow less, he will believe that God Almighty his trust doth reclaim and receive. He will not murmur when he doth but restore the pledge, deposited with him some time before. He should know that while the object is in his hand on trust, to turn it to use as the Depositor wills, this he must; and when his duty's done therewith, to its Master it must return; and tho' this thing of delight in his heart and on his lips may burn, he should look upon its loss approvingly, tho' His decree be stern. Let him not think the object from his grasp has been snatched; it is but that to its former Owner it has been despatched.[169]

XXII

We journeyed thence, and saw men thro' their sins by torments mocked, " the emptiers having emptied them," and to think that these were righteous in their lives, I was shocked. At one time they would nail them to a tree, at another they would tear them as a goat asunder with glee; then again with a sling-stone they would hurl at them, as the case may be. Then said I to the man who took hold of my right: Tell me, pray, if I have found favour in thy sight, these men did never sin, nor others' money unlawfully win, wherefore then have they been brought into this tumultuous din?

And he replied: O son of man, these men whose praises thou dost sing, saying " they never sinned, nor can anyone a word against them bring," 'tis because the chance to do ill never to their hands did

cling, yet their intent was ill, hypocrites, the Word of the Lord they, going astray, would kill. Asleep they would appear, but their heart would be awake and on the alert, and in jealousy and lust its fire would itself assert. And when they had the chance to do evil, they would to it in secret attend, and when the moneys would come to their hands, these without regret they would spend. They would invent against innocent men false reports and to them currency lend, such as they had never seen or heard, to be true they'd pretend. These fools knew not that the eyes of the Lord over the wide earth do roam, and so they hid when doing evil, afraid of men, making the secret place their home. And tho' seeming to dwell under Righteousness' dome, their record will be found in the prostitutes' tome.

The Everlasting God, who in men trieth the reins and heart,[170] from whose ken no earthly thing itself can part, who causeth them from this world to depart, and after death before the Judgment-seat to start, of Him they took no care or heed; His terrors they feared not, rebelling against what He decreed. 'Tis on this account that hot tears now their eyes do feed.

XXIII

We journeyed thence in haste, when we perceived in Tophet placed men thought by us ever holy and chaste, having subjected themselves to all forms of sacrifice, nor had there been found on their lips any thing of vice. Marvelling as I did to see them in such plight, I enquired of the man who spake to me as to the meaning of this sight, and he replied: Guilt in these men has been found, in so far as their hard fate they were bound to receive with good cheer, as something sweet and pleasant in life's round. They should have spoken, " Happy are we such paths to gain! How pleasant such lot to attain! Happy we, put to the test our faith to try: this day we shall merit to shelter in the secret place of the Most High! We shall leave the Vale of Tears, and enter the blest abode with the Ten Martyrs[171] as compeers. This day our stedfastness let us show, and

how beautiful our inheritance will grow! Let us this day the life inherit of the world etern, and redeem ourselves from Tophet, where the wicked their doom do learn."

But they, on the contrary, ultimately chafed under the stress of their desolate soul and its needs, despairing as to whither their former conduct now leads, and thus they lost the merit of both their earlier and later good deeds, since they exclaimed, We have observed the charge of the Lord, and have gone back; and what boots it that we have done this, and walked about dismal and black? [178]

For this their attitude they have by evil been overtaken; and it is clearly understood why to nought but terrors they are forsaken

XXIV

We journeyed thence, and see at the junction's border a man lying spread in a frying-pan of copper, filled with tin and lead; he was bound by hooks and unclothed, as if perishing he looks; a perpetual fire unquenchable beneath is burning of piles of wood and bones, which they in profusion are turning. And near the pan is a pit, narrow and deep, filled with ice which makes the body creep, and the angels that onward with wrath and anger do sweep, suffer him from the awful fire to leap, and bury him in the midst of the icy frost, and then again from the ice into the frying-pan he is tossed. This they do from day to day to his consternation, and to this treatment there is no cessation. Then I enquired of the man who spake to me, wishing to know the cause and the reason why in this case the torments follow their laws; and he replied, saying, This man of worthlessness has proved his godlessness by causing a married woman's faithlessness. Hence the curse has been laid upon him, confusion and shame, for the Word of the Lord he has contemned, and frustrated the law commanded in His Name. He has sinned, having taught his neighbour's wife the adulteress' way, faithfulness to scorn, so that she mixed with strangers, and from them bastards were born. That they were not his sons, her husband soon did

realise, and forsaking them and their needs he would close his eyes and hide his face, denying their claims and ties. He taught them neither knowledge nor moral worth; and when they saw that all control had vanished from them on earth, they seized the path of evil, melting away with mischief filled; one time sinning in error, at another sinning because so they willed; until at length killing others, they themselves were killed. 'Twas as though this adulterer had slain them with his own sword, for to him was attached the blame of all this sinning horde. These droll ones, to beast akin, know not that a great sin hangs on some little sin; He alone who doth man's heart and reins examine, in counsel wonderful, great in doctrine, seeth how one small ill can win over others to destruction's din; so did the Men of Wisdom determine, no sin is slight, whether great or small the origin, for looking at the greatness of the Lord, seeing 'tis He who doth ordain, surely whether a man sin in ignorance or presumption, He will place them both on the same plane.

XXV

Now as we journeyed thence, we looked, and lo, a man of darkest hue, the skin of whose body was exposed to view. We saw them strip his skin and hang him on the tree with speed, whilst serpents and adders would there upon him feed. On seeing this, I was affrighted and well-nigh exhausted, the fear of death upon me lighted; then I asked of the man who spake to me the cause to show, wherefore upon this wight such grievous ills did grow. And the reply came, This one did the blood of the innocent shed, therefore marvel not if he spew forth what he hath bled; remember that he killeth many who destroys one single life,[173] for they that suffer for his guilt are the victim's children and wife; yea, when they see that their support from them has flown, they steal and lie, and in their vessels hide what others own. And when their deeds to men become revealed, some by exile, others by hanging, their fate have sealed; for, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon ben Tabrimon[174] did they, despoiled,

raise a hue and cry, and the consuming flame of suffering and want caused the multitude to die. One sin, in truth, doth to many others lead ;[175] 'tis, therefore, not to wonder, if the wicked on the Judgment Day on wrath do feed, and if " as the waters cover the sea," torments cover them as their meed ; for the evil of the sinner doth increase, and is the source which great and grievous sins doth release.

XXVI

We journeyed thence, and looked upon the abode of sorrows and distress in pits which deep down did press, where fire consuming fire did glare ; they who saw this, of ever seeing joy did despair. Divers regulations here did rule, and the angels of death were as the ostrich cruel. There on rich carpets the judges would take their seat, allotting of the four death-penalties of the *Beth-din*[176] the one that is meet ; there neither mercy nor compassion doth prevail, nought is seen but the heart which mourning doth assail ; no sound is heard but that of weeping and wailing, and the voice of the sick as of one in the throes of travailing, and the groans of the slain giving up the ghost, and the cry for help coming from the slaughtered host. Sore of heart and broken in spirit, they cry and howl, making a great mourning, bitter to the soul. At these sounds the ears tingle, and tears in one's eyes mingle. When I beheld these sights, I was seized with terror, trembling overtook my heart, wandering in error ; writhing, I could not hear ; I was too confused to tell what was the fate these sinning ones befel.

Then spake I to the conversing angel : O lord, I am overwhelmed with pain at the sight, my heart can no longer strength retain to look upon each single soul and the fate which is each one's dole. Yet having now seen in part what these individuals of agonies for themselves did win, I would desire that thou make known unto me the rule in general wherein these sinners against themselves did sin, so that they and what to them befel may unto succeeding generations the moral tell.

And the man replied, Thy demand is just; therefore, what thou askest, fulfil I must. Attend, then, to all the things which unto thee I shall speak, so that thereby they who are turned by my parable instruction may seek.

XXVII

Know, my son, that these men whom thou seest steeped in such sorrow, some from the laws of science strange doctrines and foreign thoughts did borrow; thereby their fellow-men to deceive they dared, and these, being cast into the fowler's net, became ensnared. Such teachings and scientific laws are nought but traps, instruments of deception and its cause; 'tis on this account these men have to grapple with confusion's wars.

As for others, their ear was deaf to sense, and they concealed within them their offence; in secret they were wicked and sinful in their feeling, whilst they showed forth integrity, justice and meekness in their outward dealing, so that men might put in them their trust, and their goods and chattels unto their hands entrust; these latter would find themselves betrayed at last, caught in the net of destruction which these men had cast.

Some of these, again, from the breasts of their learning would not suckle another, fearing lest their knowledge would diminish, if they took sweet counsel with an unlearned brother; but they forgot that just as the clouds when full empty upon the earth their (fertilising) rain, so they who deducting from themselves and loading others with their glorious gain, are as though they kindled one light after another from one luminous main.

Others there were who would not brook another wise one in their sphere, lest their own name might be eclipsed, this was their fear; hence their bodies have served as manure (which the roads besmear), and cut off from the midst of their people, such souls have paid their penalty dear.

Some had a mind determined in the assembly to preach, and the

people by their fine voices in prayer to reach, so that they the hearts of the chamois might capture by their speech, and the female gazelles confide in them, when they would beseech. He alone who trieth the reins and heart of man, knew their false intent when they did teach.

Among them were such as with the workers of iniquity would track, and though these did not act as they, yet looking on with glee, in duty they were slack; 'twas in their power the erring to restrain, but they did not hold them back, and for this reason they from the land of the living their portion lack, and double for their sins receive of torments black.

Some stirred up their hearts like an oven, making of ambush-lying an art, and if one thing did lay them low, and painful sorrow to them impart, 'twas when they suspected others of that in which they took no part, and for this cause their sword did enter into their own heart.

Some donned "phylacteries"[177] on their foreheads and "fringes"[178] on their garments, so that they might catch men unwarily by these ornaments. Of the noble ordinance's clause, of the precepts and the laws, they would make nets and trap-doors, and 'tis on this account that the evil for them designed upon them pours.

Some never gave a coin to the lowly and depressed but in the open meeting-place along with the rest; whereas in spots where they were unseen by men and alone, at one time they would drive them off, at another they wounded them by angry tone. To be carried to the brook of the willows,[179] they and their goods can only for such sin atone.

Some there were who in teaching others felt displeasure, for they willed not that others with their own attainments themselves should measure; suffice it, they be deemed by those who saw them as learned, it mattered not whether their words the title for truth and integrity earned, or if they into dumb idols had been turned. Oh! what folly in man for his heart to be overjoyed, when others him praise for that of which he is devoid! If the one praised for that which he lacks were truly clever and wise, would not that false praise cause

anguish and sorrow in his heart to rise, he regarding such praise from the eulogist as nought but shame and lies? And he would set about in diligent search for the method one tries wherewith to verify the opinion which men of him do entertain, and he would not rest until he brought it to effect, and did over it the mastery gain.

Some again their meet punishment did court, when they were guilty of spreading an evil report, for it was accounted unto them who invented such out of their own heart, as tho' they themselves had actually in those misdeeds taken part.

Some denied the Lord, and would say, "He is not," and where the wicked would congregate, they would be in that spot; no Divine punishment would they fear, nor tremble at their lot; they gathered not after their God, nor thought of His bounties one jot, for their eyes and hearts bedimmed, understanding forgot, as tho' with *Sheol*[180] they had made a pact, and a covenant with death did plot; therefore, from the land of the living are they cut off, and their name from beneath the heavens out they blot.

Some were false witnesses giving their evidence with lying; by their wanton deception making their houses of lies, as brooks water denying; thinking that the world had been forsaken by God, who its every want is supplying; not realising that between one who stretcheth forth, and one who throws an object, there is no difference in the least,[181] and that he who taketh hold of the hide is as though he flayed the beast.[182]

Hence doth the Holy Law, which is constant, pronounce against the accursed: "The hand of the witnesses shall be against him first"[183]; so that all shall know that when one testifies against a man that which is a lie, it is as though, striking him with his sword, it is he who causeth him to die.

Some there were defective in brain, like unto the mad, who thought of nought but eating and drinking and being glad; they never laid to heart any wise thing and sound; they mocked at men of fame, content to give their own name to their piece of ground; 'tis, therefore, no wonder if consternation them doth surround.

Some on prophesying falsely were bent, and laws and statutes from their own hearts they did invent; not such as were God's Word, in His Name sent, but on telling what they neither heard nor saw, were they intent.

Some laboured incessantly, foolishly wearying themselves with the false and vain, 'tis on this account that they are beaten from earth, their bones crushed, and oblivion is their gain.

Some were constantly oaths in their mouths nursing; you heard from them nothing but swearing and cursing; and from the frequency with which they to indulge this habit did dare, when they were upbraided for swearing, they would swear that they never swore, they knew it not, nor did they care.

Some would utter Heaven's Name in vain, making mention of it for the purpose of everything profane, in regard to matters having no lofty and holy strain; and therefore the curse of the ban upon them is lain.

Some would sit about in their carriages, telling tales of what occurred in palaces to the King and his Court, empty dreams and varied talk impossible to report. Whereas of everything wonderfully wise, amounting even to prophecies, "'Tis weariness!" would be their cries. And it is because they withheld from themselves wisdom's laws and were careless concerning the world's applause, that their shortcomings have been accounted unto them as sins of presumption, and as though they had trampled upon the granaries in their assumption.

Some were doctors quack, who did all knowledge lack; they knew nought of the works on medical lore, and thro' their foibles the hearts of the sick were made sore; they would say, "Who is like unto us, who dare us command? What doctor before us can stand, or who will hold back or stay our right hand?" Thus would Hippocrates speak, and Galen [183a] reply, saying, "If you will not trust us, we'll not continue," and the affrighted folk would upon them rely.

But these stupid quacks did not know that by their dreamings and vain show, after which they made the people go, human life they

were laying low, so that they were accounted who acted so, as shedders of blood, I trow.

Some, again, in the concerns of the community took no share, nor in act nor word did they show any care, saying, "What business is this of ours? God cast them down, let Him them raise," but they did not divine what would befal themselves in after days; this is why, by visitation and extermination, He drags them along in Death's own ways, whilst "enlargement and deliverance would in the end rise for their fellow-Jews from some other place," and as for these wicked ones, brimstone will be showered on their dwellings, and they will lose all grace.

Some would swear falsely and vile, God and men they would revile; hence in the deep mire of Tophet they swell the pile, and are fed to the full with the bitterness of bile; for in the sight of God Almighty falsehood is abhorrent and foul, He would have us believe: 'tis for this that suddenly He the coating of their liver did cleave.

Some their eyes did daub so that they looked awry, pretending their intent was good, and that their eyes were raised on high. They saw that the courts of their mansions with baths should abound, so as to indulge with the women that the place did surround. This is why they are put into the sink's foul-smelling path, sent there by the anger of the Lord of Hosts and His wrath.

Some were with their niggardliness foolishly oppressed, they could not bestir themselves to revive the heart of the depressed; therefore, for their wickedness downwards they digressed, and they are to the full in the place of the vision impressed, and are come by lions to be caressed. Ardently did they err with one who was strange, and the bosom of such embrace, while they possessed a wife of good favour, a fruitful vine of her race; their vision went astray, stumbling, of judgment they lost all trace; hence the Lord's Hand is against them, they have forfeited His grace.

Some after dominion followed far and wide, and made unto themselves crowns in their pride; those who made a show of their modesty, these would prize, whilst the men truly humble and meek would be

for scoffing and scorn in their eyes. Therefore, as a parable and bye-word, as a terror, are their cries.

XXVIII

And it came to pass, as I listened to the words of Daniel, the man of my heart's desire, and heard the groanings of the creatures burning in fire, and the sound of lamentation from the wretched souls beating their hearts as tho' on the lyre, and as I saw the carcases loosening and dissolved of the transgressors dire, water ran down from my eyes, and my thoughts were lost, prior to my fear lest a like judgment might myself overtake, when my life, placed among glaring lions, might be at stake, realising that my own iniquities rising over my head were huge, and that for the soul within me there was no refuge.

When, however, Daniel, the man of delight, saw me in confusion stare, sunk in the depths of despair, and my horn finding in the dust its lair, and my crown polluted down to earth I did tear, and that never again to see happiness I could dare, and that I cursed the day on which my mother me did bear, he addressed me, saying, Why be confused and look astonished and stand aghast, when the full anger of the Lord hath admonished ? Art thou wearied to see how the vengeance of God His enemies hath punished ?

Then I answered and said: By thy life, crown of the times, to holiness wed, mine iniquities which have risen above my head, I call them to mind, my soul within me hath bled ; thy servant knoweth how to evil I sped, for honour I gave shame in its stead, when my heart backwards I led. I had a soul pure, but my acts sullying it, its purity fled, and I did not exclaim, "Where is God, my Maker dread ? " Woe to me, were I to be judged according to the deeds which I bred ! for I have been as the shepherd with folly fed, making gold my trusty shelter and shed, saying, "Give, give ! " like unto the horse-leech[184] ever on the search with full desire for gold and metals bright, and I never did tire. I increased my guilt and transgression more

than all generations in succession, and for the sins and iniquities and trespasses which I did commit, whatever fate He above deals out to me, He as the Righteous Judge doth sit; He it is that doeth truthfully. As for me, I as the wicked sinner myself doth quit.

Then said unto me Daniel, the man of delight: Remove wrong from thy heart, and clothe not thyself in fright, for thou art spoken of as one of honour and right; evil shall not befal thee as thou dost ween, since thou a listener unto God's commands hast been, though doubtless sin and transgression in thee have been seen, thou acting toward God and man with deceitful mien, and in place of honour, satisfying thyself with that which was mean. Nevertheless, in that which thou hast accomplished well and clean, having expounded the Books of the Prophets, and made known among people their power and marvellous sheen, thou hast made unto thyself a name as that of the great in the earth and thy soul has aught upon which, saving itself, to lean. And how could the world bear that thou shouldst gather unto thyself shame, when at the time that the Law had ceased, sweet and rich in fame, thou didst rise, and restore the Crown of the Sacred Text to those who were asleep in name?

Added to this, with desirable qualities has thy life been crowned; nor for revenge or bearing a grudge[185] didst thou ever give ground. When a man against thee sinned, thou didst forthwith forgive, thou didst never forget a favour as long as thou didst live; nor didst thou rest quiet until the kindness thou again to him didst give. A basket of manna wast thou, which for others thou didst fill. Thou didst not chafe, nor regard the accidents of the time with ill-will;[186] but didst bless the merciful God both for the good and the ill;[187] for this hast thou built thyself in the World of Angels an abode enduring still. Thou didst never withhold good from him to whom it was due, nor did with thee one associate to whom something of thy excellence did not accrue. Thou wast with thy learning neither miserly nor scant, and to those who asked, freely thou didst say: Upon me is thy every want; let him come unto me who after the Lord doth pant. Thou wast a faithful friend, who of thy kindness and pity didst spend.

Never didst thou hear a man God's Holy Name proclaim but thou didst repeat, "Blessed be He, and blessed be His Name."[188] And whilst thy friends and comrades at thee were mocking, and making merry, and to eating and drinking were flocking, and by slaying sheep and cattle the festive board were stocking, they delighting themselves in the world's pleasures, in its delights rocking, thou thy thoughts turned as the hart panting for the liquid streams, for the water of the Torah wast knocking.[189] Thou gavest neither slumber to thine eyelids nor sleep to thine eyes, until thou didst gather all the words of wisdom which men as pearls do prize, and didst adorn them with a comment which out of God's perfect Law did arise; so that thou as sovereign commentator didst stand forth unique, neither omitting the syntax nor the literal or derived explanation,[190] which the text doth bespeak. There are none of the hidden secrets or marvellous mysteries therein contained, which are not in thy work duly explained, so that thy words as words of prophecy were acclaimed. Thou didst cause men the names of the other expounders entirely to forget, for when they saw thy comments with confusion and shame they were met, and they even trembled at thy words who, as priests, in the front rank were set. How did Isaiah, the Prophet, rejoice when thou didst appear of his book the commentator! By my life, when he saw thy comment upon its contents, he swore by his Creator that thou didst realise his meaning in thy explanation, and show thyself his truest imitator. He vowed, too, thy mouthpiece and advocate to prove, and to satisfy thy soul with brightness, and to deliver thee in love. If thou but knewest how joyous was Solomon, King of Israel, when he was informed by Michäel[191] as to the explanation given in thy works, O Immanuel! and how he prayed for thy weal unto the Being El,[192] thou wouldst understand that thou hast a splendid advocate by which thy redemption to entail. As thou livest when he heard thee exclaiming, "The *morsel* which thou hast eaten, thou shalt spew it out"[193] as referring to the *enticements* which man has to renounce at the end, he said, "This is the time to be glad,"[194] and sportively he laughed to such a degree that the sound its echo to a

distance did send. Then he swore that this was his intent, and he saw no expounder who understood what his saying meant but thee alone, the one of the time anointed with the oil of His own holy ointment.

And when we two from Tophet shall ascend, and our steps unto Eden shall wend, his heart within him will rejoice, he will come to greet thee, when he seeth thee, with gladsome voice, and there of glory and honour without end shalt thou receive—verily, when it shall be told unto thee, thou wilt not believe. There, too, joy and gladness thou shalt obtain. Let us rise and go, for this is not the rest which thou shalt gain.

Then I answered and said, O my lord, as thou hast said, thus shalt thou do! "Draw me along, and I shall follow after you."[195] Ne'er have I tasted trials such as these; take me away from this Valley of Carcases, for I am ill at ease.

Then said the man unto me, Take hold of the hem of my skirt and keep steady in my train; "look not behind thee, nor stand about in all the plain"[196]; whereupon, directing our steps, on the way we stole, confiding in the hand of God our spirit and our soul.

XXIX

Now as we went forth from Tophet and our thoughts were lost in dread, whilst our faces were turned and our wings were spread in the direction which the way to Eden doth tread, soon as we from Tophet had journeyed forth travel-wise, we came to the top of a ladder placed on earth, the end of which to heaven did rise.[197] And as on the higher steps we did alight, the God of the World came into sight, and there the heavens new and a new earth we saw; therein was nothing foul, no loathsome flaw, only an earth purified, where holiness is in store, and steps are prepared for the holy-souled that lower, second, and third degrees enfold. There is the perfect light of which the wise have told, that it is a sevenfold light as that of the seven days of old. For what beauty and excellence therein is found! No weariness is there, none who fall to the ground; in those souls

purity is rife, "bound up as they are in the bundle of life" [198]; they shine forth as the brilliance of the sky, and they become as bright luminaries in the world on high. There are the souls of the innocent poor; there the life which doth to eternity endure; there is continuous joy and gladness, of interruptions no trace; there is Sarah holding Isaac, her son, in a mother's embrace; there is Rebecca impressing her kiss upon her son Jacob's face; and there towards Joseph doth Rachel leap at skipping pace, whilst Leah is beating lovingly at the doors of the children of her race. There is Abraham, our father, in excellence hoary, our chiefest of joys and the crown of our glory. There are Moses and Aaron, of brothers the pair; there are the Levites who the Ark did bear. There is David rehearsing his psalmody's air, and there are Judah's kings, passing before him as the host reviewed from the Temple stair.[199]

There was the first man, Adam, in his place, with Eve, full of tenderness and grace; there Mordecai and Hadassah,[200] there were Othniel and Achsah,[201] Abner [202] and Amasa [203] were there among the throng; there was Asaph [204] unburdening his song; there was Jehosaphat [205] and there was Asa,[206] and there was Michaiah ben Yimla.[207] There was Elisha ben Shaphat of Abel-Meholah,[208] in prophecy great, and there was the Shunnemite,[209] the woman of weight; there, too, were found the men of the Great Assembly,[210] of judicial state. There was Micah of Moresheth [211] (which in Judea lay), and there Sibbechai, who once the Philistine did slay.[212] There was the son of Cushi Zephaniah,[213] and there Nahum of Elkosh [214] (who spoke with fire). There was the son of Berechiah son of Iddo, namely: Zechariah,[215] and there was Isaiah, the Prophet; eke Judah's king, Hezekiah.[216] There was Josiah who died in Megiddo [217]; there was Gad, the seer,[218] and there was Iddo.[219] There was Joshua,[220] and there was Jeremiah,[221] and there was Baruch,[222] the son of Neriah; there was Hacaliah's son, Nehemiah,[223] zealous for the Rock, and also Ruth, of Moabite stock.[224] There was Enoch,[225] and also Noah,[226] and there was Samson, son of Manoah.[227] There was "Amos, who was among the herdsmen of Tekoa," [228] and there was Jonathan, who died on Mount

Gilboa.[229] There was Rahab, "the harlot,"[230] among those who continue to rise side by side, on this account—because she the messengers did hide. There Miriam, the prophetess,[231] was to be found, and Tola ben Puah[232] we saw on our round. There was Elihu, son of Barachel Ha-Buzi,[233] and there was Rabbi Yehuda Ha-levi,[234] also Rabbi Yehuda Charisi.[235] There was the Doctor, our Master, Moses ben Maimon,[236] the Servant of the Lord, and there Mattathias, the High Priest,[237] who once drew the Hasmonean sword. There were the women who led sympathetic lives; also Shiphrah and Puah, the Hebrew midwives.[238] There was Jael, wife of Heber, the Kenite;[239] there Ehud ben Gera, the Benjamite.[240] There was Solomon, named Yedidiah;[241] there was Jehosaphat,[242] and also Obadiah;[243] and there, too, was Jehoyada, the High Priest;[244] and his son Zechariah. There could be seen Reüel,[245] Hobab,[246] and Jethro,[247] also Gideon,[248] with his attendant Phuroh.[249] There was Harbonah,[250] filled with zeal, and ready prepared, who spake, "Lo, there is the gallows which Haman to make had dared." Shem and Japheth, who, once placing on their shoulders the garment, were there, these twain who covered the shame of their father that uncovered had lain;[251] there the lame would skip as the hind, and the tongue of the dumb sing once again—in that place, too, was Melchizedek, King of Shalem.[252] There of Phinehas, son of Eleazar,[253] one heard, because for his God he was zealous, and with strength himself did gird, so that against Zimri ben Salu and the daughter of Zur he was mercilessly stirred. There were all the tribes of Israel; there was Hannah,[254] and there was Samuel[255]; there was Shecania ben Jehiel, one of Elam's sons, head of the disciples, who addressed Ezra concerning the guilty ones who had married Cuthæan and other strange wives, asking "Is there hope for Israel in this thing (to save our lives)?"[256] There was Bezaliel, son of Uri,[257] (appointed by God's command), also Benayahu, who plucked the spear from the Egyptian's hand.[258] There was Caleb, the son of Jephunneh;[259] there Eldad and Medad,[260] who in the camp their prophecy did say. There was Abraham's servant,[261] standing at the well of water to which his

steps he did wend, and there was Elijah, who in the whirlwind unto Heaven did ascend.[262] Even Tamar was there, who sitting in the gate of Enaim, herself to deception did lend.[263] There was Judas, the Maccabee,[264] who among heroes doth sit, and there was the Cushite king's servant,[265] who brought up Jeremiah from the pit. There were Jeduthun, and Heman,[266] and Etham the Ezrahite[267]; there were Eliphaz the Temanite, Zophar the Naamathite, and Bildad the Shuhite;[268] there was Elisheba, daughter of Aminadab,[269] with the other saintly dames; there was Deborah, the prophetess, "the woman of flames"[270]; there were Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah;[271] there were Joel, Amos, and Obadiah; there were Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah; there were Malachi, Haggai, and also Zechariah.[272] There was Cyrus, Persia's potentate,[273] who, razing the cities, made Babylon desolate. There were Shemaya and Abtalion,[274] and there was Joseph ben Gorion;[275] also Rabbi Hanina ben Teradyon.[276] There was R. Judah, the Prince,[277] who compiled the Mishna; and there were the redacteurs of the Talmud, R. Ashi and Rabina; there was Abaiya, and there was Raba, there were R. Joshua and R. Akiba. There were Rab and Shemüel,[278] Hillel and Shammai, and R. Ishmael; also Rabban Simon ben Gamaliel. There the lamented R. Solomon Yedidiah[279] and his son Solomon came to the fore; there on his right was R. Yehuda, the assessor,[280] with age hoar, and there were also the pious R. Sabbatai,[281] son of R. Mattathias, and R. Joel,[282] his son-in-law. There was R. Samuel, my lamented righteous father-in-law;[283] there was Boaz[284] with Naomi[285]; and there Justa, my pious mother, filled me with awe. There the Lady Brunetta, my saintly mother-in-law,[286] that lit up the earth with her splendour, I saw. There was the scholar R. Benjamin, my teacher and friend,[287] who instructed me in the Law towards my life's end. There was the scholar R. Zedekiah Anav[288] with his three sons; there the pious R. Menahem Anav,[289] who was wont to heal the sick ones. There the righteous R. Isaac, the physician,[290] came into sight, and there R. Menahem Bozecco,[291] and R. Sabbetai, his son, were on his right—all destined at the end of days to stand by the lot which upon them shall light.

There the scholar R. Sabbatai, the saint[292] Leo and his brother R. Menahem, were found; there was R. Yehuda the Warden,[293] with whom I fain would in comradeship be bound. There the Doctor R. Abraham[294] and his brother R. Meshullem looked around; of the saintly ones on the right and on the left a whole host did abound; there was the daughter of Pharaoh, from whom full light did beam, because she had drawn forth Moses from the stream;[295] there were Eshcol and Aner,[296] there Abner the son of Ner[297]; there were the Tanaim and the Amoraim,[298] and there were all the sons of the Nebiim.[299] There was Nehemiah, son of Hecaliah,[300] with Ezra, the scribe,[301] a number of the early saints that could not be measured, nor could one describe. These appeared, and crowns upon their heads they had, while in the garb of salvation and the mantle of righteousness they were clad; partaking of one round of joy and gladness, exulting in song, and feasting on the radiance of the *Shechinah*[302] all day long.

XXX

Now while we about the streets of Eden were turning, and seeing what grade the men of Wisdom were earning, I observed men filled with honour and majesty's spark, compared with whose beauty sun and moon were dark. A passage unto them was given in the region of the angels of heaven. I recognised of these neither that one nor this, and asked the man who spake to me the cause of their bliss. "These are the pious among the Gentile state,[303] who by their intellect and wisdom have become great. They rose on the steps of Learning's ladder in capacity according to their rate, and they did not with their forefathers mate, who to a generation belonged that acted as a rebellious and stubborn violator, whilst they with their intelligence searched out who formed them, and who was the Creator, thro' whose goodness they into being came, and who brought them forth from nothingness to something with a name, and set them in this World's frame, and what the purpose was of their creation, and what its aim. And as of their fathers they enquired, and reflected on the

answers given as required, they felt how these were bare and not what they desired, and so they came to contemn their fathers' belief, and determined to search the faiths of others for relief. And as they passed the Faiths of all others under examination, and found that they were firmly built upon a strong foundation, whilst their own Faith for its folly deserved condemnation, they did not say, by our Faith we shall stand, for from our fathers as a tradition it has come into our hand; but they chose of all the beliefs views such as seemed to them right, upon which men versed in science had no cause to fight; of these they took hold, to these they adhered with their might, whereas those matters which all peoples would slight, on these they would turn their backs and banish them from their sight. And when men boastfully would attach a name unto God, our hearts trembled, it shook our frame to think that each and every people should give Him some definite name. We, however, say, be His name whatsoever, we believe in the First Existence, the True One, whom we never from our life can sever, the Being that was, is, and will be for ever, who created the world at the time when Wisdom determined His plan, and yet, in spite of the strength of His Revelation, is hid from man; He fainteth not, nor is weary; and as for searching His wisdom, no one can. He compassionates His creatures, supplying their wants as a shepherd his flock doth feed, and calling us to Him at our life's end, when His Glory shall gather us in to receive our meed."

XXXI

And as we ascended Eden's heights, we were destined to see tremendous sights, for there were placed thrones exalted and high, the marvel of miracles it seemed to my eye, to feast upon which the mind could itself not satisfy. Among these there was a shining throne, and the earth was filled with its brightness; it was "like the work of bright sapphire, and as the very heaven for clearness."[304] And as for the footstool under its feet, its entire length was made up of electron,

and it was my longing desire to sit thereon. Whereupon I spake, O my lord, for whom is this glorious throne of delight ? and for whom is the footstool, work of the sculptor's might ? And he replied : By thy life, the throne is reserved for the noblest of the pastors' scion, for Judah spoken of as "the whelp of the lion,"[805] he who above his brethren did tower ; whilst the splendour which its ornamental blossoms doth shower is " for the law-giver that from between his feet shall not lose power " [806] ; to be seated on this seat shall be thy dower, and thou shalt be near him from that hour.

Now hearing this, the excellence of Daniel, my kinsman, I called to mind ; he who had led me in the way of truth and caused me the straight path to find ; who had befriended me when the fugitive's track around me did wind ; he, indeed, the diadem of the holy crown that my forehead did bind, the life of my flesh, and the soul for whom my spirit pined. I bethought me of his distinct greatness and generous dealing of every variety ; of his knowledge and wisdom, of his meekness and piety, and how his praise had resounded to the ends of the earth in society. Then said I to the man who took hold of my right : My lord, may I find favour in thy sight, show me the place where Daniel will encamp, my brother-friend, show me the house which they for him to build intend, the spot in which his last rest he shall spend. And he answered me, saying : Know of a surety that exceeding great is the height to which he doth ascend, and the earth is full of praise for him to its very end. And although thy merit, falling short of his, will have before him to retreat, since he the sin of many did bear, and would for the transgressors entreat, yet realising by the higher sense that, without thee, his rest he could not with calmness greet, he has suffered his tabernacle near thine to be placed, tho' thy poorer worth cannot at his value be graced. He knoweth, however, that in thy companionship delight he shall see, he being as Moses, and thou his Joshua shalt be. And since all shall say, as (my guide) observes, your souls once united and held fast together, not to be freed, " Shall two walk together, unless they be agreed ? " [807] 'tis no marvel that joy upon me has beamed, knowing " my lot in

pleasant places to fall has seemed,"[208] inasmuch as on his account I shall be redeemed.

Then I said unto the man: As thou livest, my lord, show me the grandeur of his throne whereon he shall rest, for I know that its height will reach unto heaven, the top thereof in the clouds will find its nest. And the man replied, Come with me, and I will show thee; his blissful joy I will trace, and the glory of his resting-place. So I went after him, drawn along by him and receiving his support, until he into the tent of Aholiab ben Ahisamech[209] me brought. And there was Bezalel ben Uri ben Hur, and all the princes of the congregation, and the stalwarts bringing increasingly the vestments for the service of the nation,[210] weaving garments beauteous and fine, full of ornament, which shone forth with splendour as the brightness of the firmament; edged with every stone precious in price, with the sapphire cut in curious device. Tables and candlesticks, thrones and crowns, were there to be seen; they were for the souls that were pure and clean; and there was a throne of ivory, great in size, overlaid with gold in wealth, giving life unto those who reached it, and unto their flesh giving health; and the stones of a crown shone forth upon it on high; whilst garments of blue and purple and scarlet were spread, and about it did lie like polished copper gleaming, unto all lands their beauty beaming. There was a crown above the throne, its weight a golden talent, set with precious stone; fine gold cannot be given in place thereof, nor can silver be weighed for its exchange to atone, and a voice crieth, "Speak and say that its merchandise is but to those who sit before the Lord alone."

And the man who spake to me said, Hast thou seen the crown and the throne exalted on high, upon which thy brother Daniel shall rise up as a lioness, and e'en with the lion shall vie? This is his resting-place for ever, here he shall stay; for unto the Word of the Lord he did hearken, and Him he did obey, and there is none like unto him as the wise worker, to whom the whole earth can allegiance pay.

Thereupon to my God I gave praise and thanksgiving with zest,

for having caused me to attain this inheritance of rest, and I spake, Blessed be the One God! No second to be His equal can claim.[111] He hath not forsaken my Master; His kindness and truth are ever the same.

XXXII

Now, as the higher steps of Eden we ascended, we about us gazed, and saw a thing at which we were amazed. We saw there men once wild as beasts in their features, that did evilly towards Heaven and to earthly creatures, that died as the wicked the painful death of the slain, and poured forth their blood as water, while their flesh as the dung about was lain.

Now, when I saw them shining forth as the splendour of the sky, ascending in elevation to the heavens and reaching the clouds on high, I said in my heart, Surely God hath forgiven the sin of the many, and, interceding, hath suffered transgression to pass by; and I enquired of him who spake to me to know the cause for this, and wherefore they had merited such a high degree of bliss; and the man said unto me thus: These are the men who sinned, who committed iniquity and transgressed, and they died for such sin before their time, and were with bitterness to the full oppressed, as they fell into terrible hands, pierced through as those slain in bands in the mountain dens, where the lion lurks and the panther stands; left there for the fowl of heaven to feed the bird of prey's demands. But it came to pass, that when they reached to death in all its bitterness, they thought in their hearts of all their wickedness, and received the bitterness of their death in love and submission, realising that it was their just recompense for their omission, so that death was sweeter unto them than life, they recognising they had deserved evil even greater and more rife, and that peradventure by reason of this, they might be released from punishment more bitter than death in its strife.[112] And they proved in death the cheerfulness and delight which were on their lips and in their heart, seeing that they received in this passing world of the payment due hereafter some part, and they were not angered, though

they under such toils did smart. And inasmuch as their end was cruel, bitter, and gory, they looked upon it as their chiefest good, as a beautiful crown, a diadem of glory, for this reason they attained to this degree of praise. Such is their story.

XXXIII

As we journeyed thence, we saw a man with sackcloth for his attire, his clothes rent, and upon his head there was mire; he was moaning, sorrowing, and weeping; his lips alone did move, thence not a sound was heard to be leaping. But seeing that I was about in his direction to rise, he wiped with the skirt of his garment the tears from his eyes, and from his heart he heaved a heavy sigh, and said unto me, Let him with song come nigh who is the man of my salvation—on whom I can safely rely. And when I realised his distressful mien, I witnessed a sight which I never thought to have seen; for this man who made sackcloth and ashes his bed, was one who had attained to the highest grade, and become of shepherds the head; of the age in which he lived he was the crown, of every age this unnamed one had for wisdom renown. Then said I unto him, O my lord, why is thy countenance fallen, and sad thy mind, and why is this sackcloth around thy loins entwined? And he replied unto me, saying: My countenance falls, when I call to mind with pity the time when I was once the happiest man in my city, for "fleet as a hart and strong as a lion, I would do the Will of my Creator,"[313] warbling my ditty. I had a ready wit, sharper than all who before me had wrought, and of all that mine eyes did seek, I wanted nought. My kinsfolk raised me to the sky, and made me their chief, leading on high; *Abrech*[314] before me they would proclaim, and each would bless himself by my name, and to me there would come shoulder and thigh, the choice bits of game. Now when I saw that all my folks looked to the work of my hands, and that all people bowed down to me, and that I was worshipped by the desert bands, I thought myself higher than the heavenly spheres; hence my imaginings in battle-

array exchanged for Law and Wisdom warfare's tears, where men in their fashion cut themselves with spears, and 'tis for this that the lion of the forest and the wolf of the wilds smote me with their fears. I said in my heart, wretched and bare, my wealth shall be without estimate and beyond compare—I shall make for myself of pride a baldachin's stair ; I shall mount on the heights of the cloud, to be likened to the Most High I shall dare. Hence fury has come forth from before the Lord ; there has begun of derision the scare. Breaking through the bands, to feelings of arrogance I gave birth, determined to make for myself a name as that of the great ones of earth. I said in my heart, I shall leave off study and learning, which I pursued with pain. Of what use is it ? I am but labouring in vain. I shall acquire substance and wealth as my pay, and neither the produce of Egypt nor the merchandise of Cush[315] shall these outweigh.

Then I rose up in all haste, and took all the treasure which my fathers had stored, and the silver and gold which the men around me did hoard, and I set forth unto a distant land in order to trade, when a voice cried, " What hast to do with the way to Egypt ? To drink the waters of the Nile,"[316] art not afraid ? At once Poverty sent forth its hand from the hole, and spreading a net for my feet, tripped me whole, and I went down, body and soul. Against me was the Lord's Hand, and I died in the midst of my days in a foreign land. What shall I speak ? How justify myself, now that my sorrow is great ? With every member of my father's house I never dealt straight. Why did I not think of the holy seed, and that men die in the house filled with usury's greed ? But whilst before the Lord I should have shown myself humble, and should not by guilt have suffered myself to stumble, but to the fear and dread of Him, trembling my thoughts should have given birth, sorrowfully following in the footsteps of the meek ones of the earth, taking my stand in His House, and sharing in the community's worry, in place of this to gather wealth I was in a hurry ; and so the Wheel of Fortune turned against me. I gathered not wealth, but I was cut off and

destroyed, I died, evil overtook me by stealth, bringing about such things, the thought of which gave me no care, but now these with vexation my heart did outwear, and dissolved me by misfortune's scare. Was it not this, that my land I had laid waste, and to kill my people I did dare ? Now when the sudden destruction had made this rent, and people saw their protection went, that all was destroyed, and utterly spent, their spirit failed, sorrow bought discontent; the land, dealing harshly with her children as tho' not hers, her soul away from her she sent. 'Tis, therefore, no marvel if creatures bitterly cry, and as the slain groan and sigh, seeing that my tent is waste, its cords torn away about do lie; there is no one to stretch out my tent again, for one to raise up the canvas I look in vain, for the children of this one and that have gone, they are no more; departed is their glory, stilled is their tumultuous roar. And were it not for my father's merit, God's anger e'en against me would be kindled, and the stock and stem remaining unto me would also have dwindled. I ask, Where is now the virtue of my fathers in righteousness prime—they who were inscribed on the heart of the tablet of Time ? Where is the father of my friend, who to the greatness of a giant did climb ? Where are now the garners of food, once bursting forth with supplies full and prime ? How have we in turn become the target for the shafts of the near and far of every clime, stripped bare as one of the worthless, who act without reason and rhyme ?

Woe to my poor soul! I should divest myself of my proud garment in weakness, and restraining my pride with the bit, clothe me in a change of raiment—one of fear and meekness. My Creator I should beseech and supplicate to remove from our midst this angry and rebellious fate. Not, indeed, to add to my possessions, and thus add to the anger of the Lord; for, as it is, when I think of my fathers, I am with shame overawed. Whensoever I call to mind the excellence of a certain man's father, whose holiness and diligence were his might, I am seized with confusion, and my flesh takes hold of terror and fright; for of the ten measures of robbery that down to the earth were hurled, nine were snatched by the members of his house

as their lot, and one to the whole of the world. Now as for me, my hands are stretched forth unto heaven, that my son the merit to learn and teach, to observe and do, be given, that he may never from His service move, that he may fulfil His Covenant and Law, knowing that strong is His Love, and that, according to thy power, thou didst teach him and him reprove. I implore thee to fill him with zeal by instruction and learning, for I know that thou canst do all, and nothing will fail of that for which thy designs are yearning.

As I listened to his words, my eyes were with tears suffused, and I said unto him, My lord, let not reports suffer thee to be confused, for I swear unto thee that, thro' God, thy life with salvation shall be infused; therefore, tremble not and have no fear, for lightnings have ceased, and the hail shall no longer tear, and as for thy son, he is sure among the righteous, and that he rules among the mighty, is clear. And now, thou who adornest the times, ornament of all lands, go, loosen the sackcloth from off thy loins, and clothe thyself in festive bands, for I have sworn by my very self that thou shalt set the pure mitre upon thy head, and deck thyself with the ornament of gold, as I have said. True it is that with thy son I shall not now unite, nor mouth to mouth shall sweet converse us delight.

Now when he saw that I was eager for him to be consoled, he did that which my request did to him unfold, for he thereupon placed the royal crown upon his head as I had told, saying, Blessed art thou unto the Lord! Thou hast given me comfort, and instead of mourning, cheered by thee, with joy and gladness I now myself disport. By my life, I will not leave nor forsake thee, O crown of my days, for my whole desire is to look upon the honour with which the wise shall give thee praise. Then we three went straggling along Eden's ways, and all who stood about sent after us their gaze, and a voice was heard unto the distance far, saying, "Immanuel hath come, to merriment there is no bar!"

And when David heard that hither I had come, he ran to meet me, and greeted me with his welcome, the harp and lyre of ten strings in his hand, whilst his glory illumined the whole land. With him

were Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun, with the harp and the lyre, and the sons of Korah [317] sounding the trumpets with fire. Then spake David unto me, "Blessed be he who cometh in the Name of the Lord!" [318] Art thou he who the rust from off my pearly utterances did ward? He then embraced me, and heaped upon me kisses thick, even as close as a girdle to the loins of a man doth stick. And he said unto me, Thou hast done me honour in so far as thou hast explained my Book of Psalm, and hast disclosed in thy comments those excellencies for which it has been awarded the palm, and explained its conceits which hitherto unexplored had enjoyed virgin calm, no man to know them upon them did seize; as I live, since knowledge doth thy soul so please, I will honour thee exceedingly by word and deed, and what thou sayest to me to do I will pay heed. Thereupon David, by the hand of one of those who stood there, sent and summoned all those who explained the Book of Psalms, telling them to bring their comment, and they all came at King David's command, David Kimchi, too, who at their head went. And when they came, they bent low before King David, and with greetings of welfare the air did resound, and they prostrated themselves seven times to the ground; and King David addressed the expounders who before him did stand, Let each of you take the passage, "May God arise, and may there be scattered His enemies' band; may His foes flee away at the waving of His Hand!" [319] Let each reveal the hidden truths therein contained, as his sense doth understand.

They then rose, and took hold each one of his way—one thus and the other thus did say; whereupon David remarked, This one sayeth, This is my comment, this my lore, yet there is none to satisfy me, none my soul to restore. Then David arose, and kissing me said furthermore, This one is the bundle of myrrh: to disclose this psalm's secret, he did himself bestir; no mystery or hint remains for explanation, from the rafters of the ceiling unto the very foundation, which he hath not revealed; he began, and finishing, left nothing concealed. He then bade me rehearse before all the meaning of the psalm, and this I did. Nothing did I withhold, nothing by

me was hid. As they listened to my comment and its virtue heard, they directed unto Heaven their prayerful word. Then did David command them to honour me, and they paid me respect, and rendered me service, such as an anointed king might expect.

XXXIV

While yet they with me converse held, lo, Ezekiel, the prophet, we beheld; it seemed as if with his roaring lion's voice we were felled. He speaks: Ten portions are mine in the matter of comment and explanation, and where is he, and who is he, who will dare to drive me from this my station? Then he turned to me saying, Blessed be the Lord, who thee hither has brought! And now is it peace with thee? And I answered, Peace it is which I have sought. Praise be to God, and thanksgiving I have paid, who has suffered me to reach this exalted grade, to witness while in the life that which no eye hath yet essayed. And he replied, Greatly hast thou honoured me in supplying the passages of my book with a clear interpretation, so that thy comment on the beginning and end of it has afforded balm for others' sickly explanation, for when to the pattern of "The Chariot" [319a] thou didst apply thy line of thought, I considered that all doubts relating thereto were set at nought; that all the founts of the great deep were opened and to the surface brought; that the children of Israel of the holy congregation may pass over, uncaught in the midst of the waters of wisdom, to the dry land which they sought.

Whilst he was speaking, behold there came Jeremias, having Elisha at his left, and on his right Elias, and behind them Baruch ben Nerias; and Jeremias stretched forth unto me his hand and said: Blessed be He, who apportioneth unto thee at His command of His glory,[320] and suffereth thee in the region of His majesty to stand. As I live, I shall bind thee as a crown to my head, and place thee as a seal on my heart and my arm, I once said, by reason of the way in which thou didst explain "Before I formed thee in the womb, by me thou wast known, and before thou camest forth from the womb, the seeds of

holiness by me within thee had been sown." [111] The labours of the commentators of the age to elucidate this passage bore no fruit, but thou didst make it clear, aye e'en from branch to root, and thus didst feed those who hungered for the truth with the honey which their palate did suit.

And whilst he spake, see the prophet Isaiah his presence proclaimed, and said unto me: Peace be to thee, thou Expounder among the prophets acclaimed, who, by virtue of thy explanations, hast the life of the world to come obtained. How my heart did rejoice when thou my text didst expound! It was like eating honey from the comb, and fattening myrrh which with balsam did abound. My words in the sight of others were as nought but to be passed by, until thou didst arise, and thy comment was the one agreeable to every eye; 'tis, therefore, no wonder if we, more than for wine, for thy love in remembrance do sigh. By my life, to be thy patron and helper I shall do my best, and every tongue that shall rise against thee shall in judgment be condemned at thy behest, and in the courts of my house with the souls that are pure thou shalt rest; nay, thy praise shall reach unto heaven, and into the clouds shall be thy crest, for thou hast borne the sin of the many, and interceded for those who have transgressed. How precious in my sight was thy skill in explaining the words, "Why be smitten, and continue to be rebellious still?" [111a] It was the very thought that was in my mind, and no expounder but thee, sage or prophet, could the true meaning find.

Now, while speaking, King Solomon (may his name be remembered for good!) appeared on the scene, and a company of prophets, authors of the Text, with him was seen, and as they saw me from afar, they knew it was an old friend they would meet, and so their mouths were filled with merriment, and in the name of the Lord they me did greet, saying: Let him come, with joy our heart heaves, bearing as he does of wisdom the sheaves [112]; the man who, in the task of explaining our works, has revealed the store of golden apples which in the settings of silver lurks.[113]

I then prostrated myself before them as it beseemed, humbly and

mute, and in the name of the Lord of Hosts, I gave them the salute; and so they took me and brought me up by the steps of Eden which high up did rise, bringing me to the part in which the tent of Moses, the man of God, lies. And when I saw that the skin of his countenance shone, a dullness came over my eyes, and I said, This is none other than the Man of God in such guise. Then did Moses put upon his face a veil, and I became in his sight as a watered garden, my soul wanting no desire that might avail, and he said unto me, "Happy art thou whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered!"[324] Who has heard such a thing, of whom hath it been discovered, that a man like thyself with a soul polluted, whom fear hath overpowered, should write a comment on books with the prophetic spirit endowered? Not by thy merit nor integrity of heart shalt thou come to inherit everlasting life; but through the merit of thy comments, which make all secrets with meaning rife, shalt thou come not weakened by age to the grave, and redeem thy soul from the pit, the onrush of waters with thy being shalt thou brave.

Now in explaining my Book, the Book of Job, thou didst indeed break through with an attack of great worth, and thou didst make unto thyself a name as that of the great ones in the earth. As a bridegroom didst thou adorn thyself with the priestly dress of beauty, when to unravel the secret of *Behemoth*[325] and *Leviathan*[326] thou didst feel it thy duty. Happy thou to have had the merit to enter into their mystery, in which no man preceded thee in history!

Then spake Solomon: By my life, amazement takes hold of my mind, when I think how thou wast able the verses of "Proverbs" to have combined, writing on the portion of the "Valiant Woman,"[327] and rising to such marvellous heights, expounding the "Song of Songs" in such wondrous flights, so that the eye cannot feast sufficiently on these lights, even that one verse, "Go forth and see, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, King Solomon in the crown with which his mother him did crown"[328]—not all the wise men of the time were able to grasp its import, in defiance its mystery upon them did frown, until thou didst arise increasing wisdom and honour forsooth, and

superadding the splendour of its secret to the inherent truth. And as for the Book of Ecclesiastes, the expounders of the age saw in it no use,[329] and the fools thought some of its expressions folly and abuse, until thou didst enter and fathom the uttermost depths of its recesses, a very forest that as a garden seemed[330]; and so after having been abandoned and sold, it found itself once again redeemed.

While yet they were speaking, lo, Joseph, the righteous (may he in glory rest !), stepped forth from his canopy, as a bridegroom dressed, on his head a great crown of gold; and as he came to the company with joy and gladness he was extolled; his eleven brothers as comrades all filed past according to age, the firstborn first and the youngest last.[331] Now as he beheld in the tent of Moses the beautiful assembly, he prostrated himself with demeanour and humbly, and said: Peace be to thee, Moses, O man of God, planted in the House of the Lord as a green olive-branch that will not fade ! Peace to thee who dwellest in the secret place of the Most High, and shelterest in that All-sufficient Shade ![332] Peace, too, to all the Company, whose foundation is on righteousness laid ! Then Moses addressed him, saying, Let him come in joy, this ornament of the holy crown of law and propriety, first in wisdom, in meekness and in piety. Peace be to thee ! to thee all success and happiness, peace to thy brethren, drawn after thee in loveliness ! Now, as Joseph turned about hither and thither, I drew his attention, and he began, By my life, this is the man who in his commentaries of me made mention, and on to my head the royal crown did raise, when by his words he judged me worthy of merit for my ways, and he wrote at length of me and my works in praise. He then took hold of me, so that I could not depart, and said, Peace unto thee, thou man according to my heart ! and I answered, saying, May the hosts of peace accompany thee, of the saintly ones the pride, thou who dost speak noble things, and explainest that which its meaning doth hide !

Then Joseph said: As I live, 'tis but to see thee I have come, and I have come forth to bid thee welcome, since honourable mention is made of thee all along, and as a lion thou shalt rise, as a lion shalt thou

be strong. Not a day passes but what there is talk of thy might, or that thy conceits do not afford the keenest delight, from the hour when thy friend R. Elias came under the shade of our roof, and made us acquainted with thy songs and thy verses of reproof. And all acknowledge that in song and satire thy intellect gains the upper hand, and they alone are the glory of every land, whereas the songs of others are as scattered chalk-sand, they in public no recognition command. Vanity are they, misleading their trend, and now, Courage! thou pleasant friend, for with us thou shalt abide as a delight to the very end.

XXXV

Now while we were in that honoured station, ten canopies we saw, that trappings of purple and scarlet coverings bore, o'erlaid from within with gold, and set with every precious stone, whilst the frame itself was of sapphire alone. In them were placed thrones of weight and height, worked in gold and filled with chrysolite, with costly crowns of majesty and splendour, compared with which the light of the sun would darkness render. Then said I, For whom are these canopies so rare, these thrones and crowns of beauteous glare?

Then Daniel, the man of delight, replied, As thou livest, they are the Ten royal Martyrs' meed; and I asked, Where are they in very deed? We have been seeking them as the day, this has been our need. And Daniel answered, They have journeyed hence with the Prince Michäel, and with them have gone Rabenu Ha-Kadosh "" and Samuel, and these are bending low and worshipping before the Lord, the God of Israel, praying on behalf of the existing remnant that a redeemer for it forth may spring, for they have seen Israel's suffering, and in great terror their petition ply, not giving Him rest until He pour forth the Spirit from on high, and hasten the final redemption's days, when Jerusalem shall be established, and be made the world's object of praise.

And he continued to speak unto me, this Daniel, man of delight, and said, Dost desire that the five canopies shall be presented to thy

sight, which are appointed for thy five comrades that are yet in life's vigour and might? And I answered, and said: By my life, I do desire it. Would that I were permitted to look upon the beauty, honour and majesty in which they are enrolled, and that the names of these I were told, and that the greatness of their power one would unfold, then, forsooth, I should feel myself consoled!

Then he said unto me: Lift up thine eyes and see; understand the matter, and comprehend the mystery. And I raised my eyes, and saw five canopies of rich report, beautiful in appearance and import, with choice crowns of fairest gold, and he said unto me: These are the canopies which honours unfold as the inheritance of the Lord's servants who their pious acts revealed, such as upon the tablet of the heart of Time are sealed.

The first canopy of joy and gladness is for a certain perfect soul, 'tis by lot distinctly reserved for him alone; "Bless, Lord, his power, and may the work of his hands for his defects atone!" forsooth, all the perfections seem to the nape of his neck to have flown, and to divide off from his head unto his very back-bone, and chased from side to side in his nature to have been sown; 'tis on this account that the favour of the Lord he now doth own. As for this man, there is no searching to his praise; chiefest of all, that he never lied all his days; true he was in word and deed, and was the first to share his people's need. He covenanted with his eyes that he would on no maiden look with intent; nor did his lips to any words of folly give vent. He hated contention, and from it would flee; if it were found in the West, in the East he would be; with the workers of iniquity no guest was he; 'tis on this account that God's glory to shine upon him (is free), and he taketh root and blossometh, flourishing (as a tree).

He fulfilled the precept "Thou shalt not avenge or bear an ill-grace"; he was head of the liberal spirits of every place; his house was open to hospitality wide, and he received men with cheerfulness on every side. On the number of accidents which overtook him, it would take too long to dilate, yet he would exclaim, "May God's Name be blessed!" in every state. He never chafed under the

occurrences which time did bring; he would bear them all, for the love of his faithful God he would sing.

His house he made a meeting-place for the wise, and he built a sanctuary such as the mighty prize; his words were more pleasant than much fine gold, and with those given to change he mingled not, nor himself sold. God made with him a covenant of peace, and the man who thought his qualities to emulate, in his dream would never cease. He would compassionate the destitute, and load them with that with which he had been blessed, and as for the tempests of the poor and needy, he would set them all at rest. "He would drench them with the fatness of his house, and water them with the brook of his very best."[334] And since he did clothe himself in his mantle of righteousness, and putting far from him their garment, never to transgressors did yield, the blessing of the Lord shall be upon him both in his house and in the field, and from heaven healing and health unto him shall arise, and as for his offspring, the blessing shall be theirs likewise.

Now the second canopy is for an honoured one, captain of the host; that he had obtained for himself the life of the world to come is his boast, when he stood in the breach on behalf of the people of Adonai, and proved himself second in heroism to the Hashmonai. The two Ariel[335] he slew, and from the people of Israel reproach he withdrew. Among the three heroes he had a name, and for the mighty steeds he possessed, he grew in fame. And when he started forth in the wars of the Lord to toil, he would sally and pierce, and all his men would return from after him but to spoil, and of the booty of God's enemies around the naked of God's people he would coil. He would make nuncios and messengers quake, and render their counsel void; he would pursue his foes and overtake them, and not return until they were destroyed. God will appoint for him an angel-guard[336] to keep him in all his ways unmarred, that to strike his foot against a stone he need not fear, nor that any plague to his dwelling might draw near. And all this, because together with valour, he possessed the liberal spirit of the best. His house was,

indeed, open wide, there was no breach therein, no one went away and sighed. He would open deliverance to those who had no strength; there the weary, and they who had spent their power, would settle down, and find their rest at length. The depressed in spirit went forth thence to fullest contentment spurred; there the call to eat and drink was heard, accompanied by some charming word. All those who passed by he would gather into his house, and receive them with smiling face; he would set the women of his house to take of confectioners, caterers and bakers the place, to satisfy eager souls daintily and with grace, such as swoon thro' hunger, and pluck off plants and shrubs in the open place. And what shall we say of his doughty wife, who slaved for those who lodged under her roof with her very life? She had pity on those who felt poverty's curse. She helped the needy from her own purse, and to every wayfarer she became mother and nurse. May the Lord recompense her work among the prophetesses and saintly women of whom history boasts, and may her reward be perfect from before the Lord of Hosts!

As for the third canopy, it is for a noble one, a man after thine own heart, who, in an increasing manner, has on thy account shown a friend's part. This merit is his for having taken his life in his hand; he has roared like a lion, and seized the prey at his command; at his anger there was trembling in the land, and he turned back on all sides of Judah and Benjamin the enemy band, until the sea of affliction would from its raging in stillness stand. He brought about for Israel escapes numberless and full, incredible when told, more pleasing unto the Lord than sacrifice of ox or bull; he removed abominations from the earth, and that which being unclean was of no worth; and since he was ever seeking his people's good, his God has by him always stood, prospering him in all his ways and deeds, and making him fruitful and great, even beyond his father's needs.

As for the fourth occupant, to the likeness of the son of God he might agree, for he could easily ascend to the highest degree; and it is for him that the fourth canopy, in its honoured station, has been

established from the hour of Creation. He is that certain intellectual one, distinguished on the Ladder's grade; having stretched forth his hand, he ate of the tree of life, and with eternal life he is paid. Mighty things of him are told, which folks in various forms unfold. Of his liberal gifts the praise from men's tongues noisily doth burst, saying, "This one comes out first,"[337] whilst the hand of all the other people comes in last and worst. He has been called "Restorer of the breach in the congregation," having to his glory, name, and praise repaired in His House the dilapidation. His dwelling would of the tent of the Law and the Testimony be the seat; there all they who sought the Lord would meet. And I who know solemnly declare, that for all this endeavour he shall be among those justifying the many, shining as the stars for ever and ever. In his love for them, he copied of thy comments but a part, placing them as a seal upon his heart, and he will not rest till his copy is complete to the end from the start, that he may learn and understand what the end doth impart, and so attempt to produce their pattern's counterpart.

The fifth canopy is for the scholarly Master A.B., of the city I name not, who of all the poets of the time has given us of the fullness of his songs. When they came to our hands, we enjoyed them as that for which everyone longs. His excellence has ascended to where the heavens do meet, and above the poets of the age is placed his seat. No earthly poet can indite a song as his to be enjoyed; they cannot do it, theirs are reckoned but null and void. A hero in speech, and for the beauty with which his language is fraught, by reason of his elegance of expression and purity of thought, far above all who before him in rhythm have taught; whenever anything is praised, it is his work, never mind if that of others be blamed; and if that which is great is not in his style to be found, it can certainly not for others be claimed. There is no composition like his in song, for his verse just as fire rushes headlong; his song is forcible, yet sweet, whether his theme he in Hebrew, in the vernacular, or in Arabic doth treat. Should any other draw near the hand of the expert to extend, he could not approach, his hand would be dried up in the end.

With his weapon[338] he performs deeds of might, and with his lance such marvels as to excite, to look upon which does not satisfy the sight. He maketh all the kings of the nations quake, and all the rulers of the earth of yore shake; with his lance he doeth wonders in their sight, as when he brandishes before their eyes his sword all bright. He would encircle Bethel, Gilgal,[339] Edom and Asshur,[340] and, as a panther lying in wait, he would make his way sure. He surrounded the inheritance of Egypt, and passed over Geshur[341]; and to gaze upon his majesty, upon the wall did the maidens make their tour.[342] The graceful damsels smiled, courting his society, yet he remained firm in his innocent piety. Of potentates and princes he was the delight, and rulers would glorify his might; "he would stand before kings," not mixing with the ignoble wight. The world was fearful of him, afraid of his language piercing as a dart, afraid of the satire which his writings contained, and his own proud and glorious part. He contended with rulers and nobles, and he prevailed; the gates opened before him, and the palace melted and failed. And when he saw that all the mighty of the earth swore by his name, he was jealous for his country, and took pity on his people's fame; standing in the breach, against the impious he fought, and cast his life away as tho' it were nought. He went to *Provence*, to the lord of Magdiel,[343] and used his influence on behalf of Israel. He lifted up his parable against the mighty ones of the land, and thundered with his voice against its nobility's band. Rulers would be his sport, at kings he would mock, when, in the guise of a merchant, seeking them, at their doors he would knock. He would give words suiting their noble station, but take silver, gold and raiment as his ration. His name would go forth among the nation, and he would come with marks of decoration. He would fight in the gates the War of the Lord and of His Law for their adoration with the prophets of Baal and the priests of abomination, and by his keen intelligence he would act prudently with hesitation, they basing their argument, say on wheat, and he acknowledging as tho' barley was the subject under consideration. He, indeed, showed by his delightful rhymes that Israel's

share in every science was as much as others' ten times. 'Tis on this account that they have given him a passage among the throng, in the world which to the angelic hosts belong.

XXXVI

After this, Daniel spake, unto me, he the man of delight : Wouldst thou wish that the canopies of honour be brought to thy sight, which are appointed for those who in the world reach of excellence the height ? And I answered and said : As thou livest, to see them is my desire ; therefore, now show me their brilliance for me to admire. And he showed me canopies hewn out of sapphire, with coverings all of stones, sparkling with fire ; to describe their beauty the tongue would tire, and the choice things that encircled them as they rose higher. And I spake unto my lord, thus, For whom are these choice things which I see ? and he replied, Understand the matter, and comprehend the mystery ! These canopies are for the saints, for certain men of Orvieto,[344] the excellent ones of earth, who have seen the works of the Lord, and regarded His actions' worth, gathering all the qualities of desirable token, concerning whom the most honourable things have been spoken ; but the quality whereby they have merited this praiseworthy station, is that they gave to the needy every consideration. They heard the cry of the poor, and did not keep still ; they compassionated the fugitive, and did not put him to shame of their will ; they clothed the naked, and in the matter of charity mighty wonders they did, while amid their liberal gifts and doles many a marvel was hid. With them the house was open wide, and the hand, as open, to dispense freely tried, while the giver with cheerful countenance to receive the needy hied. How many orphans did they raise, how many widows did they bring into joyous ways, and how many of those bound in fetters did they release to brighter days ! And in the time of famine, what a fund of charity did they unroll, satisfying thereby the thirsting soul ! Thus will the blessing of the

fathers upon them come, and no wonder that in the Temple of the Lord will be their home.

XXXVII

And it came to pass, while we were in that honoured station, that Daniel, the man of delight, said unto me: As thou livest, God hath presented thee with a goodly ration, in having suffered thee to see of the past and the future things of wondrous worth, and hast seen the guard of the holy ones and the prophets of earth that do serve in Eden, God's garden from the world's birth, the place of the wicked ones, too, who have been brought down wonderfully from their mirth, their souls grievously amid lions bemoaning of joys the dearth.

Heaven hath shown thee this all, that the world's children may know the fate which upon them shall fall. Observe thou, therefore, all the things which thou seest, and write them for a memorial in a book, placing them in the ark in some nook, that the last generation for their guidance may look. And as for thee, whilst thou art still in the life, proclaim aloud (the voyage you took), and make known to the men of thy generation what sights thine eyes have stirred, and what thine ears have heard. And as for me, Daniel, who came forth to instruct thee with wisdom, when first thou didst supplicatingly before me stand, I will entrust thy spirit into thy Creator's hand, who for His mercy's sake will into oblivion thy sins command. Thou, now, turn thee to the left or to the right on thy ways, and approach the goal, tranquilly awaiting thy lot at the end of days.

XXXVIII

And it came to pass when he had finished speaking these words, that he was hid from my sight, and him I could no longer see. I sought him eagerly indeed, but he was not to be found by me. And as I was in the thick of the storm, roaming after him, thinking

peradventure I might find him, I was roused from my sleep, and as I called to mind the things which I had seen in a vision, I muttered aught, and then my terror was deep; I feared for my life, and from my phantasy's dream I awoke, and I roused my hand to write down that which my hearing and sight bespoke; all my strength I employed, I omitted nought; and may God, my highest joy, the rock of my strength, my refuge, whose trust I sought, who inspired me with confidence on my mother's breast from the hour when out of her womb I was brought, deign to accept my speech; and may my teaching, dropping upon the hearts of the noble among His people, with the blessing of rain be fraught, my words impressing themselves upon the tablet of their heart, so that I become not as those singing unto the dead, or crying unto idols to take their part! And now, as for me, my hands are unto heaven spread, that whilst His breath is yet within me, I may merit to learn and teach, to observe, and in His precepts tread; and that at the latter end, God's mercy may grant me support, taking hold of my right, and give me my rest in honour in the place where it shall be my delight to meet with those who have brought righteousness unto the many, as the stars for ever and ever shining bright.[345]

NOTES

[1] Originally a place of sacrifice to Moloch in the Valley of Hinnom; cf. Isa. xxx. 33; Jer. vii. 31; xix. 6, etc. Here synonymous with a place of torment, or "Hell."

[2] Gen. ii. 8 *sqq.*, stands for "Paradise." The literal meaning of the Hebrew is "delight."

[3] Ps. xxxix. 4.

[4] Dan. ix. 23.

[5] Ps. xxxix. 5.

[6] Dan. viii. 2, 16; a river in Persia, held by some to be identical with Choaspes. The Hebrew form is *Oulai*.

[7] Song of Songs i. 4.

[8] Gen. iii. 24.

[9] Cf. 1 Chron. xxvi. 16.

[10] Ezek. xxxvii. 11.

[11] Job xx. 16; cf. Deut. xxxii. 32–3; Ps. cxl. 3.

[12] Gen. xix.

[13] Gen. xxv. 34.

[14] 2 Sam. xxi. 21.

[15] 2 Kings viii. 26.

[16] 2 Sam. iii. 3.

[17] Judges xvii. 1 *sqq.*

[18] 1 Kings xxii. 40, 51–3; 2 Kings i.

[19] Judges iv. 2 *sqq.*

[20] The Book of Esther.

[21] Exod. xvii. 18.

[22] Cf. 2 Kings xxv. 23, xxii. 3 *sqq.*, xxv. 22.

[23] 2 Sam. ii. 13, etc.

[24] Short for Jehoiakim; 1 Chron. iv. 22.

[25, 26, 27] *Ibid.*

[28] 2 Kings xxv. 23.

[29] Cf. Ezek. xi. 1.

[30] 2 Kings xxv. 23.

[31] 2 Kings xxiii. 29.

[32] Exod. i. *sqq.*

[33] 2 Kings iv. 12 *sqq.*; v. 20–7.

[34] Num. xxv.

[35] Judges ix.

[36] 1 Kings xviii. 17–40.

[37] 2 Sam. xv. 12.

[38] *Ibid.* xx. 1 *sqq.*

[39] Num. xxv. 14.

[40] Neh. ii. 10.

[41] *Ibid.*

[42] *Ibid.* ii. 19.

[43] 1 Sam. xxv. 2 *sqq.*

[44] 1 Sam. i. 3.

[45] *Ibid.* ii. 22.

[46] 1 Kings xvi. 29.

[46a] The text is clearly incorrect, for Ahab was the son of Omri, and the name of Zedekiah's father is not given, while Kolaiah and Maaseiah are referred to in Neh. xi. 5-7, among the "valiant men."

[47] 2 Kings xxiv. 17 *sqq.*

[48] 1 Sam. xxi. 8.

[49] Gen. iv. 8.

[50] 1 Kings xvi. 31. Hebrew form of Jezebel.

[51] 1 Kings xxii. 11.
[52] 2 Sam. iv. 2, 7.
[53] *Ibid.* ix. 2.
[54] Gen. ix. 22.
[55] Gen. xix. 30–8.
[56] Jer. xx. 1.
[57] Num. xxi, 21.
[57a] Gen. xxxvi. 20.
[58] Num. xxi. 33.
[59] 2 Kings xxv. 8.
[60] *Ibid.* xviii. 13.
[61] 2 Kings. xxiv. 10 *sqq.*
[62] Gen. xiv. 2.
[63] *Ibid.*
[64] Judges iii. 8–10.
[65] 2 Kings. iii. 4.
[66] Son of Vespasian, Roman Emperor, who took part in the destruction of the Second Temple at Jerusalem (70 A.C.). "Ha-rasha" is the Hebrew for "The Wicked One."
[67] Num. xiii. 21.
[68] Of Macedonia, styled "Epiphanes" (*illustrious*) by the Greeks, but nicknamed "Epimanes" (*madman*) by the Jews, who, in the days of the Hasmoneans, under the leadership of Judas Maccabeus, won a signal victory over him, and re-established the worship of the One God in Palestine (164 B.C.).
[69] Ezra iv. 8, 9.
[70] *Ibid.*
[71] Lev. xxiv. 11.
[72] 2 Kings xiv. 21; 2 Chron. xxvi.
[73] 1 Kings, xvi. 34.
[74] 1 Kings xi.
[75] Gen. xxxix.
[76] 2 Kings xxi. 18.
[77] 2 Kings xxiii. 34 *sqq.*
[78] 2 Sam. xiii.
[79] 2 Sam. xiii.
[80] 1 Sam. i. 2.
[81] *Ibid.* 6.
[82] Gen. xxxiv.
[83] Cf. 2 Kings xii. – xiii. 13.
[84] 2 Kings xv. 38.
[85] 1 Kings xv. 16.
[86] 2 Kings xv. 1 *sqq.*
[87] 1 Kings xvi. 9.
[88] 2 Kings xxiii. 1.
[89] *Ibid.* xxv. 27.
[90] Dan. v. 1–3.
[91] Gen. ix. 25.
[92] Cf. Num. xi. 8.
[93] Neh. iv.
[94] Born at Stagira (Thrace) 385 B.C., founder of the Peripatetic School of Philosophy at Athens; pupil of Plato and tutor to Alexander the Great. His writings were numerous.
[95] A Greek physician, b. 131 A.C.; for a long time the authority on medicine and anatomy.
[96] Alfarabi (Abu Nasr), Arabian philosopher, born in Farab, Turkestan, and died in Damascus, *c.* 950. He studied at Bagdad, then the seat of Greek philosophical learning. His writings had a great influence on Jewish literature.
[97] A pupil of Socrates, one of the greatest of the Greek philosophers, born 429, died 347 B.C.
[98] Greek physician, sometimes called "The Father of Medicine," born 460 B.C.
[99] Avicenna (Ibn Sina), physician and philosopher, born at Bokhara in 980; his works greatly influenced Jewish thought in the Middle Ages.
[100] Gen. l. 25.
[101] Cf. Eccles. ii. 4 *sqq.*

[102] Gen. xxxiii. 14.

[103] Originally a Syracusan colony on the Adriatic. Immanuel spent his last years at Fermo in the march of Ancona.

[104] Jer. xii. 5.

[105] Deut. xxviii. 30.

[106] Isa. xi. 9.

[107] Ps. xxx. 6.

[108] Cf. Gen. xxii. 7.

[109] Deut. xxxii. 29.

[110] Nahum ii. 3.

[111] Buffalo, generally rendered "unicorn."

[112] Cf. Exod. xiii. 13.

[113] Ps. cxxxvii. 9.

[114] The Holy Law had to be studied for its own sake, and not for any material advantage.

[115] *Literally* "House of God"; cf. Gen. xxviii. 19.

[116] Cf. Exod. xxi. 6; Deut. xv. 16–17.

[117] Joshua xiv. 18.

[118] Job xxxiii. 24.

[119] Joshua xv. 44.

[120] In the Talmudic treatise known as the *Ethics of the Fathers*, ch. v., § 13, the following words occur: "There are four characters among men—he who says, That which is mine is mine, and that which is thine is thine; his is of a moderate nature. Some say, This is of the nature of a man of Sodom," etc.

[121] Deut. viii. 17.

[122] *Ibid.* xv. 14.

[123] Eccles. xi. 1.

[124] *Ibid.* 2.

[125] Deut. xv. 8.

[126] *Ibid.*

[127] In Rabbinic language this is termed "stealing another's mind."

[128] In this respect the Jewish code made no distinction whatsoever between Jew and non-Jew.

[129] Learning and education form the pivot of Jewish life even to this very day. Study was the anchor of the Jew in the Diaspora from the hour when the Temple of Jerusalem was destroyed, and the Jewish polity ceased.

[130] Eccles. ii. 12.

[131] Isa. lxv. 23.

[132] "Flay a carcase in the market-place, rather than be under the painful necessity of applying for charity, and say not, 'I am of noble origin, I am a descendant of Aaron, the high priest; how can I stoop to such an occupation?'" (Talmud, T. *Pesachim*, 113a).

[133] Isa. lxvi. 3.

[134] 2 Kings xxi.

[135] Num. xiv. 6 *sqq.*; Book of Joshua.

[136] Book of Samuel.

[137] 1 Kings xvii. 1 *sqq.*

[138] *Ibid.* xix. 16.

[139] Jer. i. 1 *sqq.*

[140] *Ibid.* xxxii. 12.

[141] In the Hebrew text the opening words of the passage are cited.

[141a] The tradition is in vogue to this very day, that a Synagogue honour or privilege confers a sort of hereditary claim.

[142] The seat of honour, reserved for the Chief of the Congregation, is on the east side of the building, and nearest the Ark, in which are deposited the Scrolls of the Law; cf. Matt. xxiii. 6.

[143] The Atonement Day.

[144] The Feast of Esther.

[145] *Lit.* "There is none like unto Three"; that portion of the service introducing

the "Reading of the Law" on Sabbaths and Festivals.

[146] Exod. xxiii. 14–17; xxxiv. 20; Deut. xvi. 16.

[147] A celebration held at the close of the Feast of Tabernacles.

[148] The first chapter of Isaiah, read on the Sabbath preceding the ninth day of Ab, the most sorrowful day in the annals of the Jews, kept as a day of mourning and fasting for the destruction of the Temple. It is generally known as "The Black Fast," in contradistinction to the "Day of Atonement," known as "The White Fast."

[148a] The great day of rejoicing during the week of the Feast of Tabernacles.

[149] The Passover, commemorative of the Israelites' Redemption from Egypt.

[150] May mean either to read portions of the service, or to be called to the Reading of the Law, which at one time was actually read *by* the person "called up," and not *to* him, as is done at the present day, by the official Reader.

[151] Prayers, more or less poetic in character, and of later composition, interpolated in the set form of the liturgy.

[152] The Sabbath or Festival portion from the Prophets, immediately following the "Reading of the Law."

[153] Zech. xi. 15–17.

[153a] *See* V, note 73.

[154] I have attempted in my translation to reproduce the play upon words as in the Hebrew original.

[154a] *Lit.* "winking with his eyes, and sending messages with his feet."

[155] Ps. xxix. 9.

[156] 1 Sam. xv. 14.

[157] Ps. x. 3.

[158] Mal. i. 7–9.

[159] The Mishna and Gemara together form what is known as the Talmud (*see* note 298).

[160] "Siphra," a Midrashic interpretation of Leviticus; "Siphre," on Numbers and Deuteronomy.

[161] The "Additional" or Supplementary commentaries on the works of early Hebrew literature. Probably "Tosephta" is meant, not "Tosephoth."

[162] "Make not the study of the Law a crown wherewith to aggrandise thyself, nor a hatchet to hew with" (*Ethics of the Fathers*, iv, 7).

[163] Isa. xlii. 21.

[164] Prov. viii. 36.

[165] Judges xix.

[166] Cf. Hosea iv. 7.

[167] Household gods, penates; Gen. xxxi. 19; Judges xvii. 5; 1 Sam. xix. 13, etc.

[167a] I have permitted myself this licence: "tong" for "tongs."

[168] Inhabitants of Ephrath: cf. Ruth i. 1; Gen. xxxv. 19.

[169] The same sentiments as expressed by the wife of the Talmudic Sage, Rabbi Meir, in trying to comfort her husband for the loss of their two sons, when he was overcome with grief: "Rabbi, didst thou not teach me that we should not be reluctant to restore that which was entrusted to our keeping? See, 'The Lord gave, the Lord has taken away, yet blessed be the Name of the Lord.'"

[170] Ps. vii. 10; Jer. xi. 20; xvii. 10.

[171] R. Ishmael, the High Priest, and R. Simon ben Gamaliel; R. Akiba and R. Hananiah ben Teradyon; R. Eleazar ben Shammua and R. Yesheshab, the Scribe;

R. Hanina ben Hachinai and R. Yehuda ben Baba; R. Hutspith, the Expounder, and R. Yehuda ben Dama.

[172] Mal. iii. 14.

[173] The converse occurs in Rabbinic literature: "He who preserves alive a single soul . . . is as if he had kept alive a whole world."

[174] Cf. Zech. xii. 11.

[175] "The performance of one virtuous act leads to another, and the commission of one sin leads to another" (*Ethics of the Fathers*, iv, 2).

[176] *Lit.* "House of Judgment," i.e. the Jewish Tribunal, or Court, that inflicted the four death penalties—stoning, burning, beheading, and strangling.

[177] Used by Jews during Morning Prayer in accordance with the oral tradition based on Deut. vi. 8. The Hebrew word *Tephillin* contains within it no element of the "charm" as is implied in "Phylactery" (φυλασσω); cf. Matt. xxiii. 5.

[178] In accordance with Num. xv. 37–41. Cf. Deut. xxii. 12; Matt. xxiii. 5.

[179] Isa. xv. 7.

[180] Depth or abyss, the grave or nether world; Hades or Hell. Cf. Ps. xvi. 10, "For thou wilt not leave my soul in Sheol." The word was, perhaps rightly, referred to a Hebrew root, meaning "to clamour for"; cf. Prov. xxx. 15–16; xxvii. 20; and Hab. ii. 5.

[181] A simile taken from the prescription governing the sanctity of the Jewish Sabbath, by which it was forbidden to carry forth or throw an object from the precincts of the private dwelling into the public way.

[182] Meaning that the one who abets a crime is as though he had committed it.

[183] Deut. xvii. 7.

[183a] *See* notes 95 and 98.

[184] Prov. xxx. 15.

[185] Lev. xix. 18.

[186] Man should receive chastisements with cheerful submission, is a teaching of Judaism.

[187] Cf. Job ii. 10; or, in the Rabbinic language: "We are bound to bless God for the ill as we do for the good."

[188] A well-known formula in the Jewish liturgy.

[189] In Rabbinical literature, the Torah or Holy Law is often compared to the well of living water.

[190] Hebrew commentators of the Bible frequently give both a literal explanation and an allegorical interpretation of the text.

[191] Prince of Angels: Daniel xi. 13, 21; xii. 1.

[192] God, the Being of Power.

[193] Prov. xxiii. 8.

[194] Eccles. iii. 4.

[195] Song of Songs i. 4.

[196] Gen. xix. 17.

[197] *Ibid.* xxviii. 12.

[198] 1 Sam. xxv. 29.

[199] Generally rendered "as a flock of sheep"; I have adopted the alternative interpretation.

[200] Esther ii. 5–7.

[201] Judges i, 13.

[202] 1 Sam. xiv. 50.

[203] 2 Sam. xvii. 25.

[204] 1 Chron. xxv. 1–2; 2 Chron. v. 12, etc.; Pss. l. and lxxiii.–lxxxiii. ascribed to him.

[205] 1 Kings xv. 24; 2 Chron. xvii.–xxi.

[206] 1 Kings xv. 8.

[207] 1 Kings xxii. 8.

[208] *Ibid.* xix. 16; *see* Judges vii. 20.

[209] 2 Kings iv. 8 *sqq.*

[210] "Men of the Great Assembly," name of the Synod, said to have come into existence about the time of Ezra (fifth century B.C.).

[211] Mic. i. 1.

[212] 2 Sam. xxi. 18.

[213] Zeph. i. 1.

[214] Nahum i. 1.

[215] Zech. i. 1.

[216] Cf. Isa. i. 1.

[217] 1 Kings xxi. 26; xxiii. 29–30.

[218] 2 Sam. xxiv. 11 *sqq.*

[219] Ezra viii. 17.

[220] *See* note 135.

[221] *See* note 139.

[222] *See* note 140.

[223] Neh. i. 1.

[224] Book of Ruth.

[225] Gen. iv. 17.

[226] *Ibid.* v. 29 *sqq.*

[227] Judges xxiii. 24.

[228] Amos 1. i.

[229] 1 Sam. xxxi. 8; 2 Sam. i. 22 *sqq.*

[230] Joshua ii. 1, 6.

[231] Exod. xv. 20.

[232] Judges x. 1.

[233] Job xxxii. 2, etc.

[234] R. Yehuda Halevi, born in Castile about 1085, a physician by profession, author of an important work on Judaism called *Cuzari*, but chiefly distinguished for his religious and secular songs, which have been incorporated in the liturgy known as "Piyutim."

[235] Poet of Toledo (1170), travelled in the East, author of the *Tachkemoni*, and translator of some of Maimonides's works.

[236] The greatest mind, perhaps, among the Jews of the Middle Age, towering by reason of his stupendous literary activity and philosophic pursuits. Born in Cordova 1135, died in Egypt 1204. Was physician to Saladin's successor and Chief Rabbi of Cairo.

[237] The doughty champion of Judaism in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, 169 B.C., of the Hasmonean family, father of Judas Maccabeus and four other brave sons (1st Book of the Maccabees).

[238] Exod. i. 15.

[239] Judges v. 24.

[240] *Ibid.* iii. 15.

[241] 2 Sam. xii. 25.

[242] *See* note 205.

[243] Obad. i. 1.

[244] 2 Kings xi. 4 *sqq.*; 2 Chron. xxiii.; *ibid.* xxiv. 20.

[245] Exod. ii. 18.

[246] Num. x. 29.

[247] *Ibid.* iv. 18. The opinion has been held that these three names were borne by one and the same person.

[248] Judges vi. 11.

[249] *Ibid.* vii. 10.

[250] Esther vii. 9.

[251] Gen. ix. 20 *sqq.*

[252] *Ibid.* xiv. 18.

[253] Num. xxv. 7–15.

[254] 1 Sam. i. 2.

[255] *Ibid.*

[256] Cf. Ezra x. 2.

[257] Exod. xxxi.

[258] 2 Sam. xxiii. 20–1.

[259] Num. xiii. 6.

[260] *Ibid.* xi. 26.

[261] Gen. xxiv. 12.

[262] 2 Kings ii. 11.

[263] Gen. xxxviii. 14.

[264] The heroic son of Mattathias, who dying in 166 B.C. gave him the chief command in the war against Antiochus. He defeated Lysias, the commander, in 164, and entered Jerusalem, celebrating his triumph by the Feast of Dedication.

[265] Jer. xxxviii. 7 *sqq.*

[266] 1 Chron. xvi. 41–2.

[267] 1 Kings v. 11.

[268] Job ii. 11.

[269] Exod. vi. 23.

[270] Judges iv. 4. The literal meaning of "Lapidoth" is "flames" or "torches."

[271] Dan. i. 7.

[272] Eleven of the twelve "Minor Prophets"; Hosea is omitted.

[273] 2 Chron. xxxvi. 22–3; Ezra i.

[274] Two of the early Sages in the first century B.C. mentioned in the *Ethics of the Fathers* in the chain of those who received the traditions of the Law handed down from Sinai through Moses.

[275] Known also as Yosippon and Pseudo-Josephus, author of a favourite history of the Jews from the destruction of Babylon (sixth century) to the downfall of the Jewish State in the year 70. He was a Jew of Rome.

[276] A high authority on Jewish Law in the second century, a fellow-martyr with Rabbi Akiba (*see* note 171).

[277] Son of Simon III, known as Yehuda Ha-nasi (*the Prince*) or Yehuda Ha-kodesh (*the Holy*). Distinguished by birth, position, and learning, he was on friendly terms with the Antonines. Compiler of the Mishna, containing all those religious laws handed down by oral tradition.

R. Ashi and Rabina were two great masters of Jewish learning, the former president of the school in Sora from 367 to 427, engaged in revising and compiling the mass of commentary on the Mishna, and thus created the Babylonian Talmud.

Abaya and Raba belong to the third generation (320–370) of Babylonian Amoraim.

Joshua ben-Hananiah was one of the five distinguished pupils of Yochanan ben Zaccai, leader of the Sanhedrin after the death of Simon ben Gamaliel.

Akiba was the martyr-Rabbi, one of those fascinating personalities of the time who risked all for the sake of the teaching of God's Law. He is said to have associated himself with the revolt of Barcochba, in Hadrian's reign (117–138).

[278] Rab, a favourite disciple of Yehuda I, transplanted the study of the Mishna to the Babylonian schools. To this first generation of Babylonian scholars belonged also his friend Samuel, the astronomer.

Hillel and Shammai were two celebrated sages who lived in the time of Herod; they interpreted the Law in their own characteristic way, the former being more moderate, the latter more stringent. The nature of Hillel was more gentle and patient than that of Shammai.

R. Simon ben Gamaliel, President of the Great Sanhedrin at Jerusalem about twenty years before the destruction of the Temple. A scholar and a man of courage; one of the leaders in the revolt against the Romans; a grandson of Hillel.

Rabbi Ishmael lived during the period that followed the destruction of the Temple; he formulated thirteen rules for the interpretation of the text of the Law.

[279] R. Solomon Yedidia and his son

Solomon. With these names we are introduced to some of Immanuel's contemporaries at Rome. According to Vogelstein and Rieger (*History of the Jews in Rome*) R. Solomon Yedidia was the son of Solomon b. Moshé de Rossi and Paolo, born *c.* 1285 ; he wrote a commentary on the first two books of the Bible, in which he frequently quotes the commentators Rashi and Ibn Ezra.

280 R. Yehuda, the aged "assessor," doubtless equivalent to "judex" in the notices of the time referring to Jewish officials.

281 Among the lists of those copyists and authors who flourished in Rome about 1285, referred to by Vogelstein and Rieger, pp. 277–8.

282 For R. Joel, some editions read R. Joab.

283 Killed in the persecutions of 1321.

284 Ruth ii. 1.

285 *Ibid.* i. 2.

286 As he speaks of his mother in Paradise, and also of his mother-in-law, and makes no mention of his father, it is surmised that his father died when he was very young and that he scarcely knew him.

287 Probably Benjamin ben Joab.

288 R. Zedekiah, a young brother of the renowned Talmudic scholar of the thirteenth century, Benjamin b. Abraham Anav; probably held post of Rabbi; a pupil in Rome of Meir ben Moshé.

289 Talmudic scholar and teacher.

290 Son of Mordecai; known by the Italian name, Maestro Gayo, was body-physician to the Pope.

291 Bosecco, a name probably borrowed from a small town where the family lived before settling in Rome.

292 Perhaps the Sabbatai ben Solomon (13th cent.)| referred to by Graetz as one of the prominent Jews of the time in Italy, and cited by Serachya b. Shealtiel in a Responsum to Hillel of Verona (*c.* 1220–95).

293 There is evidence that Jewish officials for superintending the affairs of the Jewish community existed at the time in Rome. Our author himself seems to have acted as Warden or congregational secretary to Rome (*Mechaberoth*, xxi, 171, 173b).

294 R. Abraham, probably the physician and Rabbi of that name in the Jewish community of Rome (13th cent.).

295 Exod. ii. 10.

296 Gen. xiv. 13.

297 1 Sam. xiv. 50.

298 The *Tanaim* were Sages learned in the Mishna, the Code of Jewish Law, compiled by R. Judah, the Prince, *c.* 200 A.C. The *Amoraim* were those learned in the Gemara, commentary on the Mishna; the two together form the Talmud.

299 The Hebrew for "Prophets."

300 Neh. i.

301 Ezra vii. 6, 12.

302 The manifestation of the Divine Presence.

303 In accordance with the Jewish teaching, "The pious among the nations of the world have a portion in the world to come."

304 Exod. xxiv. 10.

305 Gen. xlix. 9. The reference is to his young cousin, Yehuda ben Moshé b. Daniel b. Moshé b. Yekutiel, called Leo Romano (b. 1292); deeply attached to Immanuel. He was an adept in the speculative science of philosophy, as taught by Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas,

and was spoken of as *philosophus divinus*. He is said to have been teacher in Hebrew to King Robert of Naples, patron of the Jews and Hebrew literature.

306 *Ibid.* 10.

307 Amos iii. 3.

308 Ps. xvi. 6.

309 Exod. xxxi. 6.

310 Exod. xxxi., xxxv.–xxxvi., etc.

311 The words of the hymn in the Jewish liturgy are, "And He is One, and there is no second to compare to Him, to associate with Him."

312 "The chastisement of suffering wipes out man's sins," is a Talmudic expression.

313 "Judah ben Tema was in the habit of saying, 'Be bold as a leopard, light as an eagle, swift as a hart, and strong as a lion to do the Will of thy Father in heaven'" (*Ethics of the Fathers*, v, 23).

314 Gen. xli. 43. Latest investigations regard this as an Egyptian word, signifying "counsellor wise"! If a Hebrew word, it would mean "to your knees," or "kneel." A fanciful interpretation is "tender Father"!

315 Isa. xlv. 14.

316 Jer. ii. 18.

317 Cf. headings to the Pss. xlii., xliv.–xlix.

318 Ps. cxviii. 26.

319 Num. x. 35.

319a The Vision in the first chapter of Ezekiel; also x.

320 The blessing recited by observant Jews to this very day on seeing a royal personage is: "Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who hast given of Thy glory to flesh and blood."

321 Jer. i. 5. 321a Isa. i. 5.

322 Ps. cxxvi. 6.

323 Prov. xxv. 11.

324 Ps. xxxii. 1.

325 Hippopotamus; Nile-horse; Job xl. 15–24.

326 Sea-monster; crocodile; Job xli.; Ps. civ. 26.

327 Prov. xxxi. 10–31.

328 Song of Songs iii. 11.

329 This was as far back as the time when there was an attempt among those engaged in settling the Canon of the Hebrew Bible to exclude the Book of Ecclesiastes from the Canon.

330 Cf. Isa. xxxvii. 24.

331 Cf. Gen. xliv. 33.

332 Ps. xci. 1.

333 The Hebrew for "Our Teacher, the Holy One"; the name applied to R. Judah, the Prince, *see* 298.

334 Ps. xxxvi. 9.

335 For the name Ariel, *see* Isa. xxix. 1, 2, 7; Ezek. xliii. 15–16.

336 Ps. xci. 10–12.

337 Gen. xxxviii. 28.

338 "Weapon" and "lance" refer to the pen which the writer wielded.

339 Cf. 1 Sam. vii. 16.

340 Cf. Gen. xxxii. 3; ii. 14.

341 Cf. Deut. iv. 14.

342 Gen. xlix. 22.

343 According to the historian Graetz, "Magdiel," which is usually taken by Jewish mediæval writers as the equivalent for Rome, here refers to Avignon, and the person referred to is the Pope, whose residence was at Avignon, not King Robert of Naples, as some suppose.

344 A town in Umbria.

345 Dan. xii. 3.

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